Commentary

Volume Seventy-eight, Number One, July 1984

Education in Defense of a Free Society
SIDNEY HOOK

The Political Dilemma of American Jews
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Alma Redeemed—A Story
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The Networks vs. the Recovery
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European Diary
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Call of the Wild
JOHN P. SISK

Books: **Norman Podhoretz on Alexander M. Haig, Jr.**
Daniel Pipes/Lionel Abel/Spencer Warren/Kenneth S. Lynn

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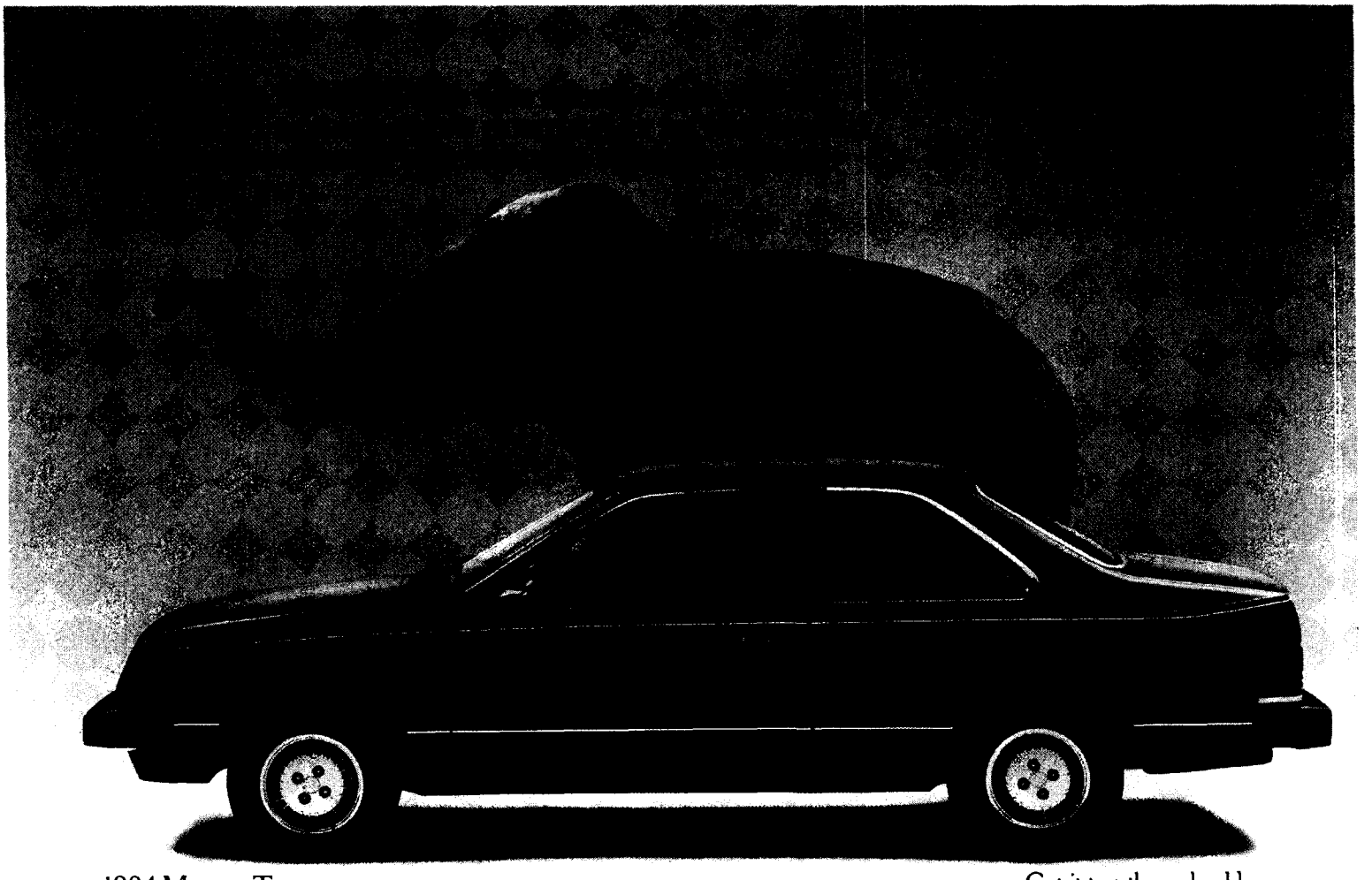

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Commentary

VOLUME 78 NUMBER ONE *JULY 1984*

Articles	17	Education in Defense of a Free Society *Sidney Hook*
	23	The Political Dilemma of American Jews *Irving Kristol*
	35	The Networks vs. the Recovery *Paul H. Weaver*
	41	Underdevelopment Revisited *Peter L. Berger*
	46	European Diary *Walter Laqueur*
Story	30	Alma Redeemed *Bernard Malamud*
Observations	52	Call of the Wild *John P. Sisk*
Letters	2	from *Henryk Grynberg, A. Lawrence Chickering, Niel Hirschson, Paul McGouldrick, Bertram Lippman, Milton Himmelfarb, Thomas H. Clancy, Lawrence J. Kramer, Ann Ward, Midge Decter, Richard Wear, Herbert H. Paper, Robert Alter, Gideon Kanner, G.C. Reinhardt, Robert Asahina, Bruce A. Heiden, Richard Grenier, Elsa Gress, Jean Frumkin, Henry Schwarzschild, Joseph W. Bishop, Jr.,* and others
Books in Review	56	Caveat, by Alexander M. Haig, Jr. *Norman Podhoretz*
	60	From Time Immemorial, by Joan Peters *Daniel Pipes*
	62	How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art, by Serge Guilbaut *Lionel Abel*
	66	Winston S. Churchill: Finest Hour, 1939-1941, by Martin Gilbert *Spencer Warren*
	69	An American Procession, by Alfred Kazin *Kenneth S. Lynn*

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Cover: The Drawing Board, Inc.

COMMENTARY (ISSN 0010-2601) is published monthly by the American Jewish Committee—Single copy is $3.00, $30 a year; 3 years $81; 5 years $120—Add $5.00 per year for all foreign, including Canada and Latin America—Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to COMMENTARY, 165 East 56th St., New York, N.Y. 10022.

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EDITORIAL & BUSINESS OFFICES: 165 E. 56th St., New York, N.Y. 10022

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Letters from Readers

The Holocaust

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Contrary to what Milton Himmelfarb implies in "No Hitler, No Holocaust" [March], I do not believe in determinism in history. Chance plays as important a part as cause and effect, but chance appears rather on the side of effect. Hitler's will and his orders caused the Holocaust, but that will and those orders were caused by the anti-Semitism he inherited and derived from the Christian culture in which he was brought up—and not from paganism. Yes, anti-Judaism and Jew-hatred are older than Christianity, but Christianity transmitted them over the centuries up to our times. Christianity replaced paganism in Greece and Rome, and is a descendant not only of Judaism but of that paganism as well. The fact is that the Holocaust happened in Christian territories, within the Christian tradition and culture, and was carried out by the children of that culture.

Murderers who have a bad conscience usually dislike the Church and its clergy, but that does not necessarily mean they are anti-Christian. Some Nazis and some of their allies voiced anti-Christian slogans, but most of them did not. The pro-Nazi regime in Slovakia, which deported Slovakian Jews to Maidanek and Auschwitz on its own Slovak initiative, without help or even orders from the Germans, was an ultra-Christian regime. Leaders or initiators of the pogroms (those mini-Holocausts) were usually priests, and it is not a coincidence that the worst pogroms usually occurred on Easter—immediately following a Jew-baiting sermon. The word "pogrom" itself is Russian, and pogroms were a specialty of that ultra-Christian country, which possessed a complete unity between state and church.

I agree with Mr. Himmelfarb that anti-Semitism was not a sufficient condition for the Holocaust. It needed the evil will and the orders of Hitler. But it also needed the transportation, the devices for mass killing, and the disinformation and propaganda of the mass media—all of which became reality "in the fifth decade of the 20th century." Had the Crusaders had such technology, someone would have willed and ordered a Holocaust back in the Middle Ages, and it would have been done—as most of their slaughters were done—in the name of Christ. In 1492, it was easier to banish the Jews from Spain than to exterminate them, though the will to do away with the Jews was clearly there. Ukrainian Cossacks and peasants tried their best with only bare sabers in 1648-49: the will was there and so were the Russian Orthodox priests, for the uprising was not anti-Christian—the Orthodox faith was an important part of the cause; all that was needed was more modern technology. I agree with Mr. Himmelfarb that "the weakening or supersession of Christianity was responsible for the Holocaust," but only because hatred or contempt for the Jews is *the weakness* of Christianity.

Mr. Himmelfarb should know better than to take Communist regimes at face value. They are neither "Marxist" nor "anti-Christian"; they have hardly any ideology at all. There were periods of intensified oppression of the Church in post-revolutionary Russia and in Poland from 1949 to 1953 because the Church was anti-Communist. But the Russian Church and religion were officially reinstated in the face of mortal danger during World War II because they were symbols of national identity and pride. In 1967 the Polish government was not "anti-Christian." Though the regime sometimes stresses its discord with the Church, it avoids any opposition to the faith of the vast majority of the population. Polish Communists never pronounce slogans which are anti-Christian, only anti-Semitic. Yes, Communist anti-Semitism is worse, but only because the totalitarian system is more oppressive in general. Is it really a coincidence that Stalin, who planned a separate Holocaust for the Jews, was an ex-seminarian who had studied for the priesthood?

Christianity contains contempt for and condemnation of the Jews—it offers an invitation to haters and to those with murderous instincts. Mr. Himmelfarb admits that modern anti-Semitism (which he insists on labeling "anti-Christian") is descended "emotionally

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from Christian hatred of Judaism and the Jews." This should be sufficient. And it is sufficient for totalitarian regimes which, with the help of the mass media, effectively manipulate the emotions of their societies. Yes, Jews have more to fear from the Christian Left than from the Christian Right—but only because the Left is more powerful and much more popular today than the Right.

Mr. Himmelfarb misunderstood my article, "Appropriating the Holocaust" [COMMENTARY, November 1982]. Its subject was not the mechanism of the Holocaust. For me Hitler is not an abstraction and can't be. I was there. In another essay, to be published soon, I consider Hitler's hatred for the Jews the main motif of his actions, including possibly the invasion of Poland, a country with the largest concentration of Jews in Europe. I also attempt to prove that only in this century, with its mass media and mass communications, could someone like Hitler have been able to gain control of the hearts and minds of millions. No genius on the order of Alexander or Napoleon was needed. In our times a "will"—especially an evil one fed by hatred—is sufficient for a demagogue to attain power and rule.

HENRYK GRYNBERG
McLean, Virginia

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The Jews' continuing search for explanations of the Holocaust is part of a broader concern to understand why mass murder and even genocide have attained a unique and frightening status in the 20th century. Milton Himmelfarb's argument in his splendid article that without Hitler's personal commitment the Holocaust would not have happened can also be applied to Stalin, Pol Pot, and others. The depths of horror and bloodshed revealed in this century suggest that more is going on than the appearance of individual madmen. Broad *social* forces are also evidently at work, and this reality sustains the ongoing search for social or theological or psychological causes.

Mr. Himmelfarb's conclusion that the Holocaust was caused not by Christianity but by its "weakening or supersession" is especially persuasive because it also serves to explain the more general appetite in various political and social settings. The essential problem—underlying anti-Semitism and in fact prejudice of all kinds—is fear and thus hatred of *outsiders*. Mr. Himmelfarb's quotation of G. K. Chesterton (that Christianity has not been tried and found wanting, but been found difficult and not tried) highlights the extent to which anti-Semitism is a problem of Christians and of Christendom, not of Christianity. Anti-Semitism is also anti-Christian, and "Christian" anti-Semitism is based entirely on fear and weakness, just as it is for pagans, Muslims, and others.

The fear underlying all social and religious prejudice was held in some check for most of recorded history because the traditional (especially religious) sources of authority and order provided places of belonging and personal structure and thus contained the fear of outsiders. In this century, however, the decline of the traditional religious sources of order and belonging—including institutional Christianity—has made way for new sources of order in the form

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of the totalitarian quasi-religions of both Left and Right. These new religions are built on foundations of fear so acute that mass murder and even genocide have become normal events in the totalitarians' search for "virtue." The horror thus continues against outsiders, who may be identified simply as all those (apostates) whose sin is the desire to preserve their freedom and independence.

Since totalitarianism of the Right is rather explicitly hideous, it is not surprising that most manifestations of this phenomenon may currently be found on the Left, which cloaks its totalitarian horrors in appeals to . . . virtue.

This would be bad enough. However, the full dimensions of the dilemma become apparent only when one realizes how many people are inclined to blame traditional authority itself, rather than its decline, as the principal cause of the search in totalitarianism for new sources of order.

A. LAWRENCE CHICKERING
Institute for Contemporary Studies
San Francisco, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Milton Himmelfarb's article was very impressive. However, I had to wonder what he meant by the statement that "some Christians now tend to be if not pro-neopagan then at least anti-anti-neopagan." Presumably—since Mr. Himmelfarb does not define the term—a neopagan is a Christian who has been mugged by "reality" or modernity—in other words, the product of a decayed Christian culture. Neopagan, I suspect, is simply another name for secular humanist, and the Christians who are anti-anti-neopagan are of the left-wing World Council of Churches variety. It is important to make this clear, since anti-Semitism now exists on the Christian Left, not the Right. In addition, there are Jewish neopagans as well, and some of them, like Karl Marx, are also anti-Semitic.

I hope we can now forget about any metaphysical hatred of Jews that, according to Hyam Maccoby, is endemic in Christendom. Mr. Himmelfarb's article effectively refutes such a thesis.

KENNETH ZARETZKE
Arlington, Virginia

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I read Milton Himmelfarb's article with dismay. It is true, as Mr. Himmelfarb asserts, that were there no Hitler there would not have been a Holocaust. It is also true that without Lenin and Stalin there would not have been a gulag. And without Pol Pot there would not have been a Cambodian slaughter.

But what is really terrifying is that, whatever motivated Hitler, Lenin, Stalin, and Pol Pot, none had any difficulty in recruiting large numbers of people to carry out their hideous intent. Therein lies the lesson of the mass massacres of the 20th century. . . .

RAYMOND GARMEL
Indianapolis, Indiana

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

"No Hitler, No Holocaust," though interesting, left me curiously unsatisfied and groping toward a better understanding of the point the author is trying to make.

While no one can take issue with the examples he cites of pagan, neopagan, and anti-Christian anti-Semitism, the relevance of these examples to the enormity of the Holocaust is not entirely clear.

In making his case that Hitler was anti-Christian, as are the Soviet leaders today, Mr. Himmelfarb may be looking primarily at outward appearances. For who is to say that the deep-seated anti-Jewish hatred of the Russians and the Nazis is not derived from their centuries-old Christian antecedents? . . .

For this reader, Mr. Himmelfarb has not satisfactorily demolished the thesis put forward by Hyam Maccoby and Henryk Grynberg.

HANS FISHER
Highland Park, New Jersey

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

To carry Milton Himmelfarb's excellent analysis to its logical conclusion, Jewry, Israel, and Judaism have much more to fear from liberal, "open-minded," and/or leftist Jews than from traditional, "narrow-minded," and/or rightist Jews.

BENJAMIN GOODNICK
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In an instructive overview of anti-Semitism, Milton Himmelfarb deplores the disappearance of Hitler behind abstractions, arguing Hitler's willed centrality to the extermination schema. He cites two articles in COMMENTARY in which Hitler is almost totally absent. Then, by way of approving contrast, he recalls that in Jacob Katz's "Was the Holocaust Predictable?" [COMMENTARY, May 1975], Hitler is mentioned twenty-eight times, adding that Katz stopped just short of saying explicitly "No Hitler, no Holocaust."

But Katz sought to emphasize the ad-hoc, contingent aspect of the extermination process, not to show that Hitler's presence was decisive. In his book *From Prejudice to Destruction* he concludes that Christianity was a necessary if not a sufficient cause for the destruction of the Jews. If the Holocaust could not have occurred without Hitler, it could also not have occurred without Christianity. . . .

Consistent with his view that the Holocaust was a relatively quickly whipped-up phenomenon, Mr. Himmelfarb, like so many others, sees anti-Semitism as but a prejudice, an animus, and Christianity as a creed, relatively easily discarded with minimal after-effects. . . . But anti-Semitism is, in fact, no mere prejudice, as even a casual glance at anti-Semitic history suggests, but a developed ideology. . . .

The vast body of anti-Semitic writings could of course be regarded as the product of centuries of "enmity," despite the fact that no other flood of doctrinal outpourings over such a long period of time (if indeed one could be found), with so little abatement, and in so many different forms and guises, has been said to begin with a psychological quirk or grudge. But evidence points the other way. The starting point is a constructed doctrine from which all else flows, rather than a mere roster of calumnies and denunciations or even acts of violence. . . .

In this clearly set-out ideology, Jews of pre-Christian times are transformed from God's Chosen into God's Damned. If Jewish tradition has it that only Jews accepted God's offer at Sinai, the rest of the world rejecting it, we now learn the world accepted Jesus while the Jews rejected him. Nothing approaching such transvaluation is to be found in the account of the Exodus, the book of Esther, or the riots of Alexandria. But it is found for the first time in history in the opening chapters of Acts, where Jews are changed from God's people into agents of the devil.

This creedal reformulation of

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Jewish identity took place in the 1st century, when Rome was at war with the Jews. The twenty-seven books of the New Testament were not created in Judea but in various Roman centers; Paul concludes one of his letters, Philippians, with greetings from the household of Caesar.

Without Hitler, it is true, there would have been no Holocaust; it is true, also, that without Christianity there would have been no Hitler. Above all, it is true that without basic anti-Semitic ideology to foster it, there would have been no characteristic anti-Semitic prejudice or animus to underscore the Holocaust. . . .

NIEL HIRSCHSON
Johannesburg, South Africa

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Milton Himmelfarb's article on anti-Christian forms of anti-Semitism, while excellent, does not explain how the ideology of Adolf Hitler relates to the other forms of anti-Semitism he analyzes. There is, in fact, a connecting link between early 20th-century anti-Semitism on the Left and German National Socialism: the ideological teachings of a distinguished German professor of economic history, Werner Sombart.

Briefly, Werner Sombart began his professional career as a Marxian socialist and ended it as a National Socialist. His 1934 book, *Deutsche Sozialismus,* which aroused enough interest to be translated into English, was an unqualified glorification of the Third Reich as the realization of "true" socialism, as opposed to the liberal capitalist order which, with its atomistic, unstructured, "heap-of-sand" principles, could not attain social cohesion.

Sombart was the most distinguished German social scientist to come out in favor of the Third Reich, and he did so in an enthusiastic, devoted way that set him apart from less consistent intellectual supporters such as Gottfried Benn and Karl Haushofer. In addition, he was widely respected abroad, particularly among institutionalist economists of the Wisconsin school. (I know this from personal contact with a member of the school who was my undergraduate adviser; ironically, the fact that my adviser was Jewish did not seem to affect his praise of Sombart.)

Sombart published a book in 1912, translated under the title *The Jews and Modern Capitalism,* which had as its fundamental thesis that the Jews invented capitalism and the capitalist ethic. . . . Sombart's argument rests on two pillars: an examination of Jewish religious teachings from which selective quotations allegedly show the capitalist spirit in full flower many centuries before capitalism began, and a cursory survey "proving" that everywhere in the early 20th century the leading capitalists were Jews, including John D. Rockefeller in the United States. . . .

The final link to National Socialism in Sombart's thought is the assertion, in the concluding chapter, that the German and Jewish spirits were utterly antithetical to each other. The German spirit was organic, attuned to nature, and communitarian while the Jewish spirit was individualistic, abstract, geometric, cut off from living things. Therefore, Sombart concluded, the Jewish link to capitalism was eternal and not just a historical accident. . . .

But the link to Adolf Hitler? According to his gifted German biographer, Joachim Fest, one of the four or five books which Adolf Hitler studied in 1918 was *The Jews and Modern Capitalism.* . . .

During the Third Reich, Sombart was honored, continuing in his prestigious chair at the University of Berlin. It is therefore not without irony that in his last published lectures of 1938, shortly before he died, Sombart was complaining that it did no good to eliminate Jews while the Jewish spirit continued unabated on the stock exchange and in the teachings of economics. . . .

PAUL MCGOULDRICK
SUNY–Binghamton
Binghamton, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . For a long time I was irritated, for reasons I could not figure out, by the use of "Holocaust" as a word, as *the* word, for what Hitler did, and planned to do, to the Jews. Eventually I realized why I rejected it. It was because no word already in use could be the right one to refer to the slaughter of six million Jews, since what Hitler did, and intended to do, was absolutely unique in history. Nothing from the past could possibly serve to convey its unimaginable actuality. From the Egyptians to the Babylonians to the Romans, on to the various abuses, expulsions, enforced conversions, and pogroms of the Christian and Muslim world, there is no recorded instance of anyone's announced or suspected determination to obliterate the Jews, to put an end to their physical existence, to finish them off, all of them, once and for all: no terms, no conditions, no demands—only extermination. . . .

I do not know who the first people were to use the word to refer to the murder of the Jews. My various dictionaries and the *Encyclopaedia of the Jewish Religion* tell us only that the original holocaust was a burnt offering in which the animal offered as a sacrifice was *totally* consumed, except for its hide, so that the priest had nothing left for his own consumption. Some etymologists find that the word comes from the Hebrew *Olah* plus a Greek suffix, which seems to indicate that the practice may have already ended by the time the word was coined. There is agreement that it was a *sacrifice,* and that, until the practice was abandoned except in a metaphoric sense, it was voluntarily offered to appease or to persuade God. I believe Jews do not especially enjoy excogitating on this aspect of their ancient faith.

I take it, then, that the word "holocaust" is historically and etymologically ill-chosen to stand for what Hitler did, and that stylistically it is in poor taste: it covers over the unique, inhumane horror with a *word,* a word that, as Mr. Himmelfarb's article tends to show, will cheapen and become devalued, will be lost in banality, as the years go on. It should be abandoned.

BERTRAM LIPPMAN
Coram, New York

MILTON HIMMELFARB writes:

The Jewish community with the oldest uninterrupted history in Christendom is the community of Rome, the capital of Christendom.

If Germany was Christian, so, equally, was Denmark. Germany murdered all the Jews it could, and Denmark saved all it could. Did the Germans do what they did because they were Christians, and the Danes although they were Christians? We know what we would call someone who said that when Jews do a bad thing they do it because they are Jews, but when they do a good thing they do it although they are Jews.

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Henryk Grynberg does not deny that Marxism is the enemy of religion in general and of Christianity in particular. What he denies is that Communist governments still believe in Marxism. By now, he says, they are completely cynical, believing in nothing. The Polish government's *modus vivendi* with the Church proves that the government is not anti-Christian.

It proves nothing of the sort. Especially for cynics, expediency comes easy. Neither Napoleon nor Mussolini let contempt for the Christian religion stand in the way of an expediential concordat with the Vatican. Melbourne is supposed to have said that he was a buttress rather than a pillar of the Church of England, because he supported it from the outside.

To the Poles the Church is the guardian of Polishness, and the government a pack of traitors installed by the immemorial enemy and oppressor of Poland. The government tolerates the Church not because it wants to but because it has to. For the sake of argument, grant that the government consists of those unusual beings, complete cynics. If they could, the cynics in Warsaw would do as the cynics in Moscow do.

Men and Women

To the Editor of Commentary:

After reading Midge Decter's article, "Liberating Women: Who Benefits?" [March], I found myself wondering whether men would choose to respond to her picture of them, so much more damning than that of the feminists, with "bowed heads and bitten tongues." Alas, I think Miss Decter has it right. But I can tell her why men don't argue with feminists. They are penalized too severely if they do so.

I am a single male by choice if not inclination. The fact that I am also a Catholic priest admittedly makes my situation more complex. But I have found that to argue with women about feminism, even with women who frankly declare their own doubts about "the movement," means losing them as friends. I have concluded with regret that it is simply an inappropriate subject for male discourse. It is a debate in which only women can participate. I hope that the Decters of this world win.

Thomas H. Clancy, S.J.
New Orleans, Louisiana

To the Editor of Commentary:

Thank you for Midge Decter's article on what the women's movement has done for me. The empress is wearing no clothes and it is time someone said so. There is, however, at least one aspect of the feminist hoax that needs more exploration---the guilt that comes with "Sophie's choice." Sophie was a Pole not a Jew, so she had a choice: she could decide which of her children (the boy or the girl) the Nazis would murder immediately. By making Sophie choose, the Nazis made her an accomplice to the murder of her daughter. If they had just taken the girl, or the boy, or both, Sophie would have been victim, but not criminal. With a choice, she was both.

The feminists offer us their version of "Sophie's choice." Common sense tells us that we cannot all be accomplished careerists and effective parents. Until recently, though, socially fixed sex roles permitted specialization without sin. Nature pointed the way and tradition removed the guilt. Now they tell us that tradition is wrong; we must be "allowed" to choose what we will do with our lives. As before, the boy or the girl in each of us must die, but, being Polish feminists not Jewish traditionalists, we get to choose which one it will be. Our cup runneth over.

Lawrence J. Kramer
Rydal, Pennsylvania

To the Editor of Commentary:

All these years of reading Commentary have finally paid off for me. Midge Decter's article has completely changed my life. Finally I see how wrong I've been about so many things.

I am thirty-one years old with degrees from Harvard and Yale, working hard at my profession, living for the past six years with a man who never seemed like a wimp (until now, of course), sharing all the housework, expenses, and decisions, and thinking everything was going reasonably well. How dumb can a girl be? Now I realize what a precarious, insecure, miserable position I've gotten myself into. Any minute now I'm going to be abandoned by Sam, my "cohabitor," who will momentarily realize (it's only a matter of time) just how emasculated he is. Any day now he's going to look at himself in the mirror and feel disgust. Then it will begin: the "emotional, psychic, and financial withdrawal."

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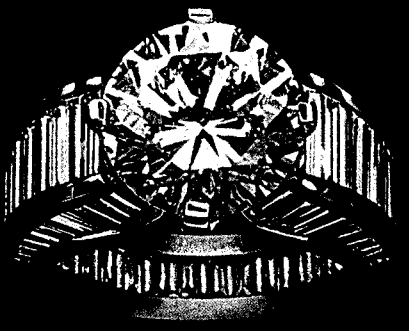

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Admittedly, without Miss Decter's trenchant and insightful exposition, I might have continued along in monstrous error until it was too late. But now I can assess my situation more realistically, and see that all the ominous signs are there. Just last week Sam told me at dinner how happy he is in his new job as a research fellow (making less money than I make, and not really enough to live on in New York). He didn't have to be like his dad and take a position in private medical practice so he could support his family. (That didn't seem to work out too well, since Sam's parents are divorced and his mother is still trying to find a job. . . .)

Anyway, Sam seemed sincere. But I realize, thanks to Miss Decter, that inside he's just sick with himself over the loss of his masculinity. He may think he loves his new job, but the money he earns means nothing because he hasn't taken on the "manly duty to support others."

I cringe to think of all those "self-conscious" discussions Sam and I have had about "who does what . . . and who owes what to whom." Last Saturday we spent twenty whole minutes deciding how to divide up the weekly household chores. I can remember times in the past when we've even had arguments about it! (That always used to seem not too unnatural; after all, my parents used to argue, too. But at least it was about real wifely and husbandly things like how much spending money my father would give my mother. My father was never a wimp!)

How could I have been so selfish and so foolish? Here I thought we were making mutual decisions about the house when all along I was indulging in "self-sufficient decision-making," pushing for that opportunity to "claim a victory."

So from now on I'm not going to let Sam lift a finger. I'm not going to annoy poor Sam and drive him away with all this trivia. After all, there's no earthly reason for him to stay with me if I don't get on top of my wifely duties. True, it doesn't seem as though he's going anywhere soon, but it must be that I'm not astute enough to see the danger signals.

With all this new responsibility, I'm going to be awfully tired. I'll just have to cut down my hours at work, or maybe even quit my job.... Sam can make the payments on my school loans: that will make him feel so much more masculine. It's a shame I had to spend all that money going to school. All of that nonsense about developing my talents and interests into a useful set of skills: what a piece of selfish, narcissistic silliness.

It's going to be awfully hard to get by on Sam's salary. Maybe he'll have to quit his fellowship and go out and hustle for those bucks. Or we can move out of our apartment and live in one room for a while (we really couldn't afford anything more these days on one salary), and give up the car. Sacrifice will be good for us after all these years of self-indulgence.

Wait until I tell Sam about all this. He's going to feel so much better about himself!

ANN WARD, M.D.
New York City

MIDGE DECTER writes:

I wish to thank Father Clancy and Lawrence J. Kramer for their letters, which are both friendly and interesting. Each, I hope, will forgive me a small demurral.

I heartily sympathize with Father Clancy for his longing to believe that the debate over the women's movement must remain an intramural affair. Who would wish for him to lose friends? Yet the problem of this movement happens *not* to be a woman's problem alone; there can be no such thing. How can men, even priests, thrive in a situation where women are, or feel they are supposed to be, disaffected? The interdicted conversation between men and women has only intensified everybody's perplexity and—yes, I will say it—misery.

Nor, Mr. Kramer, would I take the so-called feminists quite so much at face value as you do. Deep down, they do not wish or intend to let the little girl die. Indeed, they wish to perpetuate her. That is the true meaning of the endless complaint that life is just too hard for those who have to grow up and accept its terms and limits.

As for Ann Ward, she has obviously got a good thing going, and I congratulate her. But why, I wonder, is she in that case so full of high dudgeon? If the shoe does not pinch, Dr. Ward, by all means feel free to wear it.

Literature & Theory

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . While I agree with several things Robert Alter says in "The Decline and Fall of Literary Criticism" [March]—and I confess I do like his reading of the Yeats quatrain—there is a paradoxical quality to his thought processes that is annoying. He begins with the apparent intention of examining "the peculiar relation between the rise of theory and the fall of criticism," yet he is principally at pains in his conclusion to verify the vital existence of literature in the face of claims to the contrary. These counter-claims come exclusively from Terry Eagleton's book *Literary Theory*, which Mr. Alter admires because it cuts down those literary theorists who come and go talking of metonymies, but which he ultimately castigates because its author, in Mr. Alter's words, is "persuaded that the existence of literature has been disproved." Really? Does Eagleton's argument disallow the existence of the Yeats quatrain, or does it, somewhat more reasonably, suggest that the term literature is a pretentious quasi-category which has had the effect of limiting our attention to a single mode of discourse, while simultaneously considering that mode as an end in itself and restricting investigation of it to a narrow range of vested entrepreneurial interests? Is it asking too much to insist that "we make sense of [a] poem by recognizing on various levels the ramified ways in which it belongs to literature, though of course there are other recognitions to be made as well"? These words, alas, are not by Terry Eagleton, but by Robert Alter.

RICHARD WEAR
Gainesville, Florida

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Robert Alter very ably hits many nails on the head. As I was reading his article, I remembered a recent piece in the New York *Times* on the untimely death and subsequent veneration of a leading deconstructionist at Yale, Paul de Man. In paying homage to him as an important spokesman for the deconstructionist school of literary analysis, the article succinctly summarized: "[De Man] believed that there was no correct interpretation of any literary work, that such works are unknowable. . . . [He] concentrated on close readings of texts to demonstrate how any interpretation could be proved overly simplistic or could mean the opposite of what the critic argued." If this is really what the deconstructionists believe, then they

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have reached what should be called not the decline and fall, but rather the *reductio ad absurdum* of critical analysis.

I would be very curious to hear how a deconstructionist would justify: a reading of Vergil's *Aeneid* as a work that teaches harsh criticism of Rome; how Shakespeare's sonnets are intended to show dislike of the lady to whom they are dedicated; how Solzhenitsyn's *The First Circle* represents a paean to the Soviet system; and how any of Elie Wiesel's works can be read as a defense of Nazism.

If the deconstructionists are right in their absurdities, then there is no point in teaching literature in the schools at any level and there is nothing to be learned from any literary text. And every literate culture in the world is wrong in revering its literary classics. There is surely room for fresh insight and new analyses, but—.

HERBERT H. PAPER
Hebrew Union College-Jewish
Institute of Religion
Cincinnati, Ohio

ROBERT ALTER writes:

Richard Wear seems to have gone out of his way to misconstrue me. The rise of the current voguish version of theory and the decline of criticism are directly linked with the new skepticism about literature as a distinctive kind of discourse. That was my central thesis, and I see nothing "paradoxical" about it. My discussion of the Yeats quatrain was meant to illustrate why there were subtly significant aspects of the language of literature that make it different from other uses of language. These differences are in the nature of the beast and do not imply "pretentious quasi-categories" or "vested entrepreneurial interests." At the same time, I am keenly aware as a reader and critic that any literary text may also be implicated in other kinds of texts and contexts, which is precisely why I made a point of saying that "there are other recognitions" besides the literary ones to be made.

Though I am in sympathy with Herbert H. Paper's view, I think that by working back from a simplifying summary in the New York *Times* to his hypothetical examples, he makes it too easy to dismiss deconstruction as merely ridiculous. De Man and his more intelligent followers choose their ground carefully and argue their positions with considerable subtlety. I would agree, however, that even the most formidable subtlety is hardly proof that such analysis does not lead to an intellectual dead end.

Blaming Israel

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I applaud Ruth R. Wisse's analysis of anti-Israel propaganda in "Blaming Israel" [February], but I offer two simpler explanations for the phenomena she describes.

First, the rising levels of shrillness and distortion inherent in recent attacks on Israel, and the extent of their penetration into the respectable, establishment press, correlate roughly but unmistakably with the politics of Israel's ruling parties. As long as Israel was governed by labor/socialist governments (while many of its Arab adversary societies were conveniently in the grip of right-wing monarchies), it could do no wrong, even when its conduct was overtly warlike, as in the 1956 Suez invasion.

But as the Arab countries took their turns to the Left, things began to change. Still, as long as Labor ruled Israel, there was some inhibition on the part of the American Left against launching an all-out attack on a nominally socialist government. But once Likud took the helm, discovery of Israel's wickedness quickly became the staple of avowedly Left-of-Center American journalists. Worse, when those horrid Israelis had the temerity to go to the polls and actually reelect Menachem Begin, that was it—they put themselves beyond the pale, and the American establishment press now felt it had been issued a license to mount a strident attack on Israel, as is its wont in the case of virtually all Right-of-Center governments in the world....

The absurd arguments that Mrs. Wisse so ably spotlights are no more than convoluted rationalizations of their authors' conveniently formulated conviction that Israel's Right-of-Center Likud government is wicked *per se*, and hence must be denounced as the root cause of Middle East problems. If one peels the American liberals' polemical onion, what emerges amid crocodile tears shed over Israel's lost morality and purity is some convoluted version of the twin notions that (a) all those righteous "progressives" out there, clamoring for justice for the downtrodden, can't really be all wrong, and (b) any foreign government that is firmly committed to a military alliance with the United States can't really be all right—or indeed, right at all.

Second—and this may shed some light on the intellectual mechanics of the views alluded to above—I do not find much mystery in what Mrs. Wisse calls that ". . . something in the liberal imagination [that] yearns for soluble problems. . . ." People who have become accustomed to the enormously high levels of political, social, and material luxury that Americans take for granted are not likely to be attracted to dealing with tasks that are difficult and dangerous. After the Great American Temper Tantrum of the 1960's, they don't even like to think about them; how much more agreeable to conjure up an image of the world in which adversaries are more amenable to the voice of sweet reason than to the clash of arms!

Since the world, however, is not merely a disagreeable but also a conspicuously dangerous place, and the people involved in this process of rationalization cannot very well deny the existence of countless corpses that litter the globe, their process of rationalization must ascribe fault to the *least* dangerous party. After all, convincing one's listeners that Yasir Arafat is a vicious murderer might only inspire them to decide that something ought to be done, and that way lies confrontation and—perish the thought—conflict. But if one can persuade the listener that conflict could be avoided if only Arafat's *adversaries* were more reasonable and accommodating, then the rationalization is complete, without its adherents having to think about conflict, or having to commit the gaffe of defending the position that Arafat is a reasonable, civilized person (although, to be sure, at least some of Israel's critics flirt with the latter absurdity by referring to Arafat as "moderate").

It follows that this process of rationalization must inherently invert moral values; it must make resistance to aggression at least as wicked as the aggression itself—indeed, more so. After all, goes this argument, it is violence and bloodshed that we are trying to avoid, and how it gets started is irrevelant; besides, it is the more

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reasonable governments that should set an inspiring example.

In short, I suggest that the engine driving the recent outpouring of anti-Israel propaganda is fueled by the all-too-familiar blend of politics and perceived self-interest. Of course, history teaches the grim lesson that in the long run perceived self-interest may not be in one's enlightened self-interest, but that is another story.

GIDEON KANNER
Loyola Law School
Los Angeles, California

Strategy for Survival

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Patrick Glynn's excellent explanation of the moral necessity for American strategic rearmament will, I hope, be read with care by the Reagan defense policy-makers ["Why an American Arms Buildup Is Morally Necessary," February]. Why they continue to back away from Mr. Glynn's moral high ground is difficult to understand. The explanation apparently lies in a reluctance to abandon MAD completely and immediately. After all, the megaton-sized Soviet ICBM warheads can be used as either city- or silo-busters, allowing the USSR to shift at will from MAD to damage-limitation. The U.S. does not have that option, and cannot create a damage-limiting strategic force overnight. Thus MAD, however intolerable as the basis for long-term defense policy, cannot be abandoned overnight—it constitutes the sole deterrent against the growing Soviet temptation to use its counterforce capability.

The administration's reluctance to be quit of MAD is also coupled to the post-election rejection of the idea of the "window of vulnerability." In the late 1970's Secretary of Defense Harold Brown repeatedly pointed out that our bombers and ICBM's were becoming more and more vulnerable to Soviet forces. Yet we chose to do little or nothing to remedy the situation on the grounds that the "theoretical" vulnerability of one element of our strategic triad was not a serious flaw in our deterrent posture. This rationale was repeated in last April's report of the President's Commission on Strategic Force Modernization (the Scowcroft report), a commission on which Brown served as an adviser. . . . The report states (accurately enough) that "the different components of our strategic forces would force the Soviets, if they were to contemplate an all-out attack, to make choices which would lead them to reduce significantly their effectiveness against one component in order to attack another." The report then explains that the Soviets would not be able to strike both bombers and ICBM's *simultaneously* because we would launch our aircraft before Soviet ICBM warheads arrived over our Minuteman fields, some thirty minutes after their SS-18's had been launched. If, on the other hand, the Soviets first launched their short time-of-flight SLBM's to attack our alert B-52's, they "should have no confidence that we would refrain from launching our ICBM's during the interval [the period of about fifteen minutes between arrival time of the SLBM's on our bomber bases and the arrival of SS-18 RV's on our Minuteman fields] after we had been hit." This "suggests that whereas it is highly desirable that a component of the strategic forces be survivable when it is viewed separately, it makes a major contribution to deterrence even if its survivability depends in substantial measure on the existence of one of the other components of the force."

What all this says in a very nice way is that the Soviets are currently able to take out our alert bomber force and our ICBM's unless the President launches the latter in less than fifteen minutes. As unsatisfactory as this may be to some, the commission's view allowed it to advise "calm persistence" and to recommend that "the preferred approach for modernizing our ICBM force seems to have three components: initiating engineering design of a single-warhead small ICBM [to be deployed circa 1990], . . . seeking arms-control agreements [immediately], . . . and deploying MX missiles in existing silos now [circa 1986]. . . ." Since none of these approaches eliminates the immediate vulnerability of our triad, the conclusion is obvious: the ICBM vulnerability mentioned by Mr. Glynn is nothing to get terribly excited about because, after all, we still have MAD and arms control. To those who reject this increasingly circular, tautological hypothesis, the alternative is clear. The key to seizing the moral high ground lies in the admission that the situation is grave and the hour late. In order to protect the moral imperatives of peace and freedom, this republic must first of all survive. Without U.S. survival all else is academic rhetoric.

We cannot argue that survival *certainly* depends on prompt, even hasty, repair of the triad. But it is clear that some degree of temptation does exist for the Soviets to use their hard-won margin of strategic superiority. As they build, and as we continue to substitute "calm persistence" for a sense of urgency in closing the window of vulnerability, that temptation can only increase. Common sense dictates that, in addition to proceeding with a long-term strategic-modernization program, we should look hard for temporary quick fixes to reduce the vulnerability of the triad. . . .

G. C. REINHARDT
San Leandro, California

Clint Eastwood

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

How nice that Richard Grenier ["The World's Favorite Movie Star," April] has discovered Clint Eastwood twenty years after the rest of America (outside of New York). Just to set the record straight, here's the correct quotation from the last scene of *Dirty Harry*:

> Eastwood to Andy Robinson (the Scorpio killer): "I know what you're thinking, punk. You're thinking, 'Did he fire six shots or only five?' Now to tell you the truth, I forgot myself in all this excitement. But being this is a .44 Magnum, the most powerful handgun in the world, and will blow your head clean off, you've got to ask yourself a question: 'Do I feel lucky?' Well, do you, punk?"

Nitpicking, I know. Still, the lines are interesting because they repeat, almost word for word, a speech Dirty Harry makes to another criminal at the beginning of the film. But there are two differences: (1) Harry doesn't shoot the first criminal (who, unlike Scorpio, is smart enough *not* to go for his gun), and (2) Eastwood delivers the first speech with irony (since Harry knows the crook won't challenge him) and the second with contempt (since Harry wants to kill Scorpio). I'm not sure what that says about the legal philos-

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ophy of Dirty Harry, but it does attest to Eastwood's acting ability (you'd have to see the film), which —if anything—Mr. Grenier underestimates.

A few additional comments: some time in the early 70's, after the first *Dirty Harry* film, Eastwood gave a marvelous response to a reporter who asked if the series "glorified violence." Eastwood replied that Dirty Harry "glorified competence."

Mr. Grenier for his part is so interested in glorifying Eastwood that he excuses the most outrageous aspect of *Sudden Impact*: instead of shooting the mass murderer at the end of the film, Harry lets her go—because she's a woman, and because her killings have been "justified" by flashbacks that reveal she was raped by the men she killed. Is Harry going soft on feminism? Maybe so, but it's more likely that Eastwood and his writers are remarkably shrewd in covering all the bases.

Finally, the *Dirty Harry* films and Eastwood's Westerns are both fantasies (at least for males) and black comedies. As fond as I am of Eastwood and his work, I'm dubious that they can sustain the weight of Mr. Grenier's analysis.

ROBERT ASAHINA
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Although I have not seen *High Noon* in many years, to my recollection its plot differs substantially from Richard Grenier's summary, and the differences suggest that Mr. Grenier's nostalgia for pre-Vietnam America has played a trick on his memory and caused him to misread the film's ethical message by 180°.

As I recall, at the beginning of *High Noon* the sheriff (Gary Cooper), *apparently a convert to pacifism,* is about to hang up his gun and marry a beautiful, refined Quaker girl (Grace Kelly). But when news arrives that Frank Miller, whom the sheriff had captured, is out of jail and gunning for revenge, the sheriff, choosing between two principles, decides to meet the challenge. As a result, the sheriff's Quaker bride prepares to leave town on the very train that will bring back Frank Miller.

Although the townspeople selfishly refuse to help their sheriff and leave him to meet Miller and his gang alone, Mr. Grenier is wrong to state that "all alone he guns them down, one by one. . . ." One person does come to the sheriff's aid: his Quaker bride. When she hears the sound of gunshots, true love overcomes her pacifist scruples and she rushes back to the town. Obtaining a revolver from somewhere she shoots one of the outlaws in the back (at great emotional/histrionic cost) just as he is about to kill Gary Cooper. Only thus does justice prevail in the town. Then the sheriff throws away his badge and goes off with his Quaker bride.

High Noon and *High Plains Drifter* (which I've never seen; daringly I rely on Mr. Grenier's summary) therefore have in common only the element of a gunfighter who more or less alone defends a town of cowards. Mr. Grenier should not be surprised that the kind of reviewer who liked *High Noon* didn't like *High Plains Drifter*, because, aesthetic considerations aside, the cultural values of the films are quite opposed. *High Noon* gives very favorable play to pacifism. Although the sheriff and his Quaker bride compromise their pacifist ideals, they do so only in defense of other principles, and indeed among the characters of *High Noon* only they have any principles to defend, for the townspeople are ruthlessly caricatured as selfish vermin. Grace Kelly's brave deed at the climax implies the moral supremacy of pacifists as more benign than others under normal circumstances, in a crisis more courageous and forceful, and always more steadfast in their commitments. When Gary Cooper contemptuously crushes his sheriff's star and rides away with Grace Kelly, he chooses private pacifism over public law enforcement.

If *High Noon* was "one of the greatest of the classic Westerns" as Mr. Grenier proclaims it, then the Middle American moviegoers of 1952 must have had some sentiments that Mr. Grenier would deny to them. Film hero John Wayne, however, did not share Mr. Grenier's and America's fondness for *High Noon*. In fact, he

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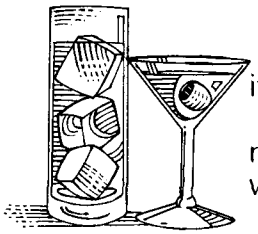

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detected a pinkish tinge in it. In a May 1971 *Playboy* interview Wayne declared *High Noon* "detrimental to our way of life" and boasted (bulwark of liberty that he was) of "having helped run Foreman [Carl Foreman, screenwriter of *High Noon*] out of this country." Yet Wayne's summary of *High Noon*, like Mr. Grenier's, makes no mention of the sheriff's pacifist bride. Wayne regarded the cowardice of the townspeople as *in itself* "the most un-American thing I've ever seen in my whole life."

So perhaps Mr. Grenier should consider the possibility that *High Plains Drifter*, whatever its intention, may really accept and propagate the terms of a hostile depiction of America as a nation of cowardly self-seekers. Cynical movies about towns not worth defending do not encourage people to defend their communities.

BRUCE A. HEIDEN
Ithaca, New York

RICHARD GRENIER writes:

Given the abuse which so many film critics have heaped on Clint Eastwood, he will no doubt be thrilled to hear that Robert Asahina finds that I (who compare him with Humphrey Bogart and Gary Cooper) have "if anything" underestimated his acting ability. But Mr. Asahina seems to have mistaken my general purpose. Some months ago I wrote an essay on Ingmar Bergman ["Bergman Discovers Love," COMMENTARY, September 1983] without giving anyone the impression that I thought I was "discovering" him fresh from Sweden. My purpose with Eastwood, as with Bergman, was to place him in his historical context, to explain his major themes and the eccentricities of his career (which made him a giant star abroad years before his films were even known in the U.S.). Now it is my view that Eastwood's overriding themes are justice—including vigilante justice—valor, and the legitimacy, when necessary, of violence. Mr. Asahina does not agree? Since I know him to be an astute critic himself, let me entice him into offering an analysis slightly more extensive than the statement that the Eastwood films are simply "fantasies" and "black comedies." After all, Panizza's *Council of Love* is surely a black comedy. Are we just to let it go at that?

I refer Bruce A. Heiden, first, to a moderate-sized dictionary. The one I have at hand describes pacifism as being "nonresistance to violence." I grant Mr. Heiden freely that I neglected to mention in my summary of Gary Cooper's *High Noon* that the sheriff (Cooper) is taking a Quaker wife (Grace Kelly), and that in the heat of battle "true love overcomes her pacifist scruples" and she guns down one of the outlaws. But how Mr. Heiden can construe this as bringing greater glory to pacifism escapes me entirely.

For what then is Mr. Heiden's Perfect Pacifist? Let us say he is an Englishman and voted in 1933 for the resolution of the Oxford Union not to fight "for king and country" (this is presumably the phase when the Perfect Pacifist displays what Mr. Heiden calls his "moral supremacy . . . under normal circumstances"). Next, Hitler attacks —strengthened in his confidence by the actions of such as our Perfect Pacifist. Millions die. When France falls the French pacifists go over to the Nazis almost to a man. But let us grant Mr. Heiden his fancy. Let us assume our English Perfect Pacifist fights Hitler like the very devil. But when peace comes, "always more steadfast in his commitments," he returns to his earlier mode, pledging never to defend his country, once again displaying his "moral supremacy . . . under normal circumstances." What is this but some kind of sanctimonious, and dangerous, charade?

Mr. Heiden will be surprised to hear that I am not a surrogate of John Wayne, who in any case objected to *High Noon* not because it gives a "very favorable play to pacifism" (which it does not), but because it portrays the citizens of almost an entire American town as cowards. Wayne's personal antipathy toward Carl Foreman (a former member of the Communist party), comes from a different source in any event. But it might also surprise Mr. Heiden that, radically opposed as they were in their political views, Foreman was no more a pacifist than Wayne. Long after the fact, Foreman set forth an allegorical interpretation of *High Noon* according to which it was all *really* the story of the Hollywood Ten (a meaning certainly missed by the American public when the film was released). The Hollywood Ten, Mr. Heiden will recall, were not pacifists. Gary Cooper, one of the country's more militant anti-Communists of the period, made still another demonstration of the fundamental irrationality of Quaker pacifism in his celebrated *The Friendly Persuasion* (1956), uncredited at the time but written, we now know, by the blacklisted "uncooperative witness" Michael Wilson.

The Art World

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . In her review of John Bernard Myers's *Tracking the Marvelous* [Books in Review, April], Jean Frumkin, though admitting that Myers went everywhere and knew everyone in the New York art world, feels compelled to cast doubt on everything he says by stressing that he is "dependable if you have corroboration," otherwise not. Why should the "corroboration" automatically be more trustworthy, pray tell? The charge is meaningless, unless you go along with Jean Frumkin's further charge that "there is a streak of disingenuousness that runs through this book." This, however, is an accusation . . . the author cannot answer without appearing to prove he does have dark doings to hide.

The truth of the matter is that John Bernard Myers was a pivotal figure in the artistic life of New York in the 50's and early 60's . . . and that he was, and is, probably the one person who got the least financial gain out of his work and his discoveries. Over and over again he found and started artists who left his gallery for more effective moneymaking establishments as soon as they became recognized. He certainly wasn't in the game for profit or sneaky dealings, but for the fun and friendship and sheer delight of "tracking the marvelous." The disingenuousness seems entirely in the beholder's eye.

But, ah, there is, according to Jean Frumkin, the shady treatment of the Mark Rothko case! And what is so suspect about that? Well, Myers puts it at the end of his book instead of in the center, as "the New York art world" expected! Obviously a crime. Also he insists on the honor and good faith of the prosecuted, although they were found guilty "under due process of law." Some proof! Since when did due process of law establish true guilt? And why should

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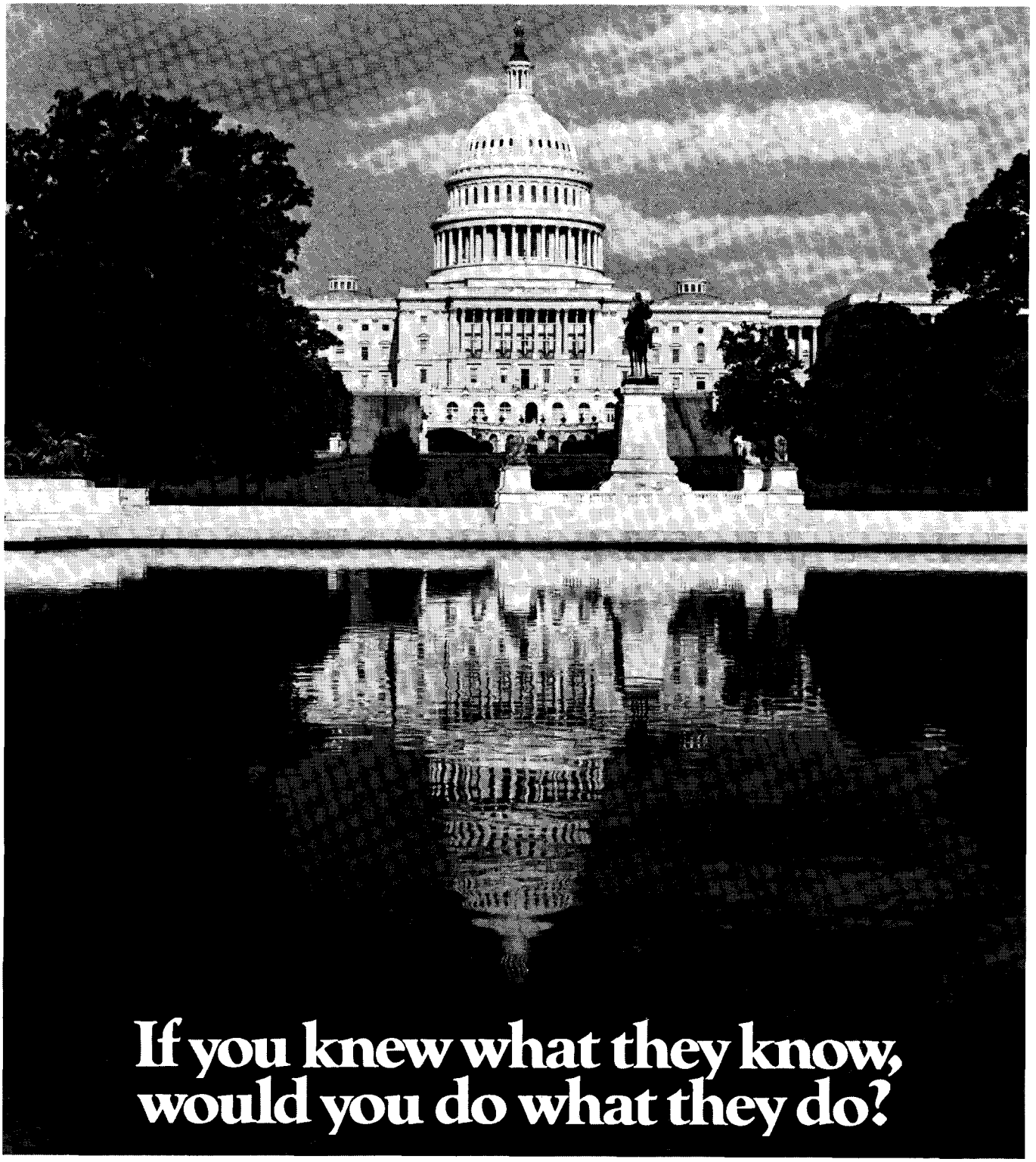

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Discord Among Neighbors

3 U.S. SECURITY & WORLD PEACE
Allies, Arms & Diplomacy

4 SOUTH AFRICA
Can U.S. Policies Influence Change?

5 INTERNATIONAL DEBT CRISIS
Borrowers, Banks & the IMF

6 SAUDI ARABIA & JORDAN
Kingdoms at the Crossroads?

7 CHINA & THE U.S.
Five Years After Normalization

8 INTERNATIONAL DRUG TRAFFIC
Can It Be Stopped?

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Myers's defense of people whose innocence he believes in prove his disingenuousness? Search me. Why are the chapters at the end of the book? the reviewer asks. Why are any chapters anywhere?

Jean Frumkin . . . ends by hoping for the arrival of other books on the period and place, particularly the critic Lionel Abel's—as if critics were by definition better equipped than plain members of an avant-garde and/or eyewitnesses to discuss what happened. And, naturally, she finds "as many syntactical faults as anecdotes" in Myers's book. . . . Reviewers invariably find "syntactical faults" galore in works they dislike, and it invariably means three or four places in which the writer's usage of language differs from that of the reviewer. But that shouldn't discourage anyone from reading this charming, lively, and informative book. . . .

ELSA GRESS

Stege, Denmark

JEAN FRUMKIN writes:

Elsa Gress seems to speak from firsthand knowledge, and perhaps she is actually a friend of John Bernard Myers. I myself have never met him, and in my review I relied only on what I could deduce from a close reading of his book.

The example I gave of two versions of one anecdote—one by Myers, the other by Julien Levy—seemed to me to demonstrate clearly that, faced with a choice between a "good story" or plain good sense, Myers opted for the good story. This makes him a lively storyteller, but it also makes one uneasy about his dependability as a historian.

Since the purpose of the book was to recount a life spent "tracking the marvelous," I questioned why Myers had gone off the track for a side trip through the "unmarvelous" Rothko affair in which he was not actually a participant. I also questioned his motivation and wondered what purpose might be served in including this episode.

I referred to Lionel Abel as a "critic" as a means of identifying him for the reader; I do not think of the term as connoting the final authority.

Myers makes no claim to being a professional writer, and *Tracking the Marvelous* should be read on that level, which is how I hope I did read it. I did, however, feel I should refer to the syntactical faults throughout the book, by which I mean *not* small errors in grammar or stylistic details, but sentences in which pronouns have two interchangeable antecedents, or sentences so constructed as to be open to two interpretations.

Since Myers did make his living from his art dealings, it seems to me naive to say that he did *all* that he did purely for "fun and friendship and sheer delight." Would that life were that simple in the New York jungle!

The truth is that John Bernard Myers has made a very special place for himself in the New York art world as a much respected "presence," and he was certainly a pivotal figure in making the Tibor de Nagy Gallery into a center for the second generation of Abstract Expressionists and for other gifted young painters of that time.

I recommended *Tracking the Marvelous* as agreeable light reading—even Myers, I think, would not take exception to that. But I also stressed the need for a book that would give serious consideration to the events of the period and reexamine certain clouded episodes, such as the ostracizing of the Surrealist Matta. That, as a matter of fact, was the real point of my review.

Capital Punishment, Cont'd.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Joseph W. Bishop, Jr. manages to cram a sufficient number of factual errors into his review of the Ernest van den Haag-John P. Conrad book, *The Death Penalty* [Books in Review, February], to make one wonder whether his powers of judgment are as defective as his mastery of facts.

Item. It is false that *Furman* v. *Georgia* addressed the constitutionality of capital punishment *per se*. This 1972 U.S. Supreme Court decision did effectively invalidate all the then existing death-penalty statutes in the country on the grounds that they had given rise to the arbitrary and discriminatory imposition of the death penalty such as to constitute "cruel and unusual punishment" in violation of the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution. It was not until four years later, in the *Gregg* v. *Georgia* decision and the accompanying cases, that the Court ruled that death-penalty laws designed to avoid arbitrariness and discriminatoriness in death sentencing could meet the test of constitutionality.

Item. It is false that the number of actual executions since that time has averaged "about two a year." Until the end of 1983 there had been eleven executions in the twelve years since *Furman*. In 1984, to the time of this writing (March 26), there have been four more.

Item. It is false that "most of these few" executed men preferred death to long incarceration. That was true for four of those who have been executed in recent times.

Item. It is false that "no women have been sentenced to death in recent years." There are twelve women on death row now, and there were that many when Mr. Bishop's review appeared.

Item. It is false that "five murderers [were] executed in 1981"; there was only one execution in 1981. Of the fifteen murderers executed from 1972 to date, eleven sought to avoid execution by seeking appellate reversal of their conviction or sentence.

Item. It is false that "every [habeas corpus] petition, no matter how frivolous, will delay the execution for weeks or months." The state and federal courts dismiss "frivolous" petitions very promptly, and in the federal courts a frivolous habeas petition cannot be appealed.

Item. There is no evidence, save Mr. van den Haag's unsupported assertion, that judges are more likely than ordinary people to be merciful to criminals, or that such attitudes are fostered by liberal professors in colleges and law schools.

Item. It is false that the Reverend William Sloane Coffin, Jr. called Warren Kimbro's trial "legally right but morally wrong." Reverend Coffin made a remark of that order about the trial of Bobby Seale, who was neither charged with nor convicted of kidnapping, torture, and murder. Neither, incidentally, was Kimbro.

Item. It is false that "the supply of eager lawyers [to handle capital appeals and post-conviction proceedings] . . . shows no sign of drying up." The unavailability of lawyers to represent capital offenders in proceedings relating to the lawfulness of their trials and sentences has long since reached a crisis stage. In Florida alone, there are some thirty-five death-row inmates who have legal remedies available to pursue but no legal counsel to pursue them. The American Bar Association itself has recognized the problem and is now trying to organize a project to recruit volunteer

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pro-bono counsel for such cases (so far without marked success).

Item. It is false that people who commit *crimes passionels* "could not today be constitutionally sentenced to death." Under every death-penalty law on the books in the forty jurisdictions that have them, some *crimes passionels* are eligible for a death sentence.

Item. It is false that "the five men executed in 1981 were white." Only one person was executed in 1981. Of the fifteen people executed to date, three have been black, but four of the fifteen (all of them white) were consensual (and to that extent self-selected for early execution), so that it is more relevant to say that three of the eleven involuntary executions have involved black men. In any case, the evidence for the racially discriminatory use of the death penalty is hardly that simple-minded. Consider, just for beginners, that every one of the people we have executed was convicted of killing a white victim, even though some 60 percent of the victims of homicide are black.

It may hardly be worth engaging a reviewer who knows the subject matter so poorly in an exchange about the merits of his views, especially when on more than one occasion his rebuttal to an argument of one of the co-authors of the book under review consists in total of "Baloney." The meretriciousness of Mr. Bishop's thinking is illustrated by his analogy of the execution of an innocent person with the negligent killing of someone by a Post Office truck. An execution is not a negligent homicide but rather a premeditated and intentional one; the wrongfulness of it may be negligent, but the killing is not, and to ignore the difference is to be morally obtuse.

Mr. Bishop, who knows that he cannot meet the burden of showing that the death penalty has a special deterrent effect on crime, relies on "common sense" to maintain his faith that it does. Does he also rely on his common sense to persist in thinking that the sun revolves around the earth? Assuming, counter-factually, that he were right, would that validate capital punishment? Is the state entitled to use any means whatsoever to achieve a socially desirable end? If drawing and quartering or boiling in oil or slow torture would result in even greater deterrence, would he then endorse those procedures? Would he endorse cutting off burglars' arms in order more effectively to deter burglary?

A society that believes the killing of human beings to be an appropriate answer to any sort of a problem is, to that extent, a deeply uncivilized society. (We need not look far for recent and current historical examples.) What all of us, Mr. Bishop included, condemn in murderers is that they have no respect for human life. But we can hardly distinguish ourselves from murderers by being in the business of official homicide and thus demonstrating that we, as a society, also have no ultimate respect for human life. Better merciful judges than lethal law professors!

HENRY SCHWARZSCHILD
Director, Capital Punishment Project
American Civil Liberties Union
New York City

JOSEPH W. BISHOP, JR. writes:

I was somewhat surprised that Henry Schwarzschild didn't prepare his squawk in time to make the May issue, as John P. Conrad and others did, for he is certainly among the most active and vociferous opponents of capital punishment. Indeed, he would have been an obvious choice to oppose Ernest van den Haag in the debate. But it may be that, true zealot that he is, the moral outrage which he feels when confronted by someone who disagrees with him would not have permitted him to display the civility which characterized Mr. Conrad's contribution to the debate.

I hardly know where to begin my comments on Mr. Schwarzschild's numerous misinterpretations and distortions, deliberate or inadvertent, of what I had to say in my review. Starting at random, many of the grounds for petitions for habeas corpus in capital cases seemed to me, and to the Supreme Court, frivolous. It is true that the Supreme Court's exhortations to the inferior federal courts to make shorter work of such petitions seem to have borne some fruit in the months since I wrote the review.

I claim no expertise respecting statistics on the number, ethnic composition, and preferences of those sentenced to death or actually executed since the *Furman* case. The figures I gave were all based on statements in the book made either by Mr. van den Haag or Mr. Conrad, which were not contradicted by the other debater. I have no reason to believe that they are any less familiar with the subject than is Mr. Schwarzschild.

Mr. Schwarzschild's objection to the statement that judges are more inclined than ordinary people to be merciful to murderers is unworthy of comment. I attributed that statement to Mr. van den Haag and to no one else.

Mr. Schwarzschild appears not to be very familiar with the New Haven Black Panther trial in which, to the best of my recollection, the ACLU was not involved. Warren Kimbro was one of those accused, along with Bobby Seale and others, of the kidnapping, torture, and murder of Alex Rackley. He pleaded guilty and was convicted. Reverend Coffin's remark seems quite as applicable to him as to Seale.

Of course no criminal statute exempts from punishment those who kill an unfaithful spouse or lover. I said only that such killers "could not *constitutionally* be executed"—for the obvious reason that the killer's state of mind in a *crime passionel* would pretty clearly constitute a mitigating circumstance. As for the *Furman* case, I said explicitly that the Supreme Court's reason for invalidating the death sentences at issue in that case included racial discrimination. As Mr. Schwarzschild must know, the petitioners in that case had vigorously argued that all death sentences were *per se* cruel and unusual, but the Supreme Court refused so to hold. It has, as Mr. Schwarzschild presumably knows, held to the contrary in a number of subsequent cases.

The victims of negligently driven Post Office trucks, of whom there are many, are, despite Mr. Schwarzschild's casuistry, just as innocent and just as dead as the hypothetical victim of an unjust conviction of murder. I see nothing wrong with the comparison of the two situations.

I stand by my contention that common sense supports the conclusion that murderers fear execution more than imprisonment. If not, what is all the litigation about?

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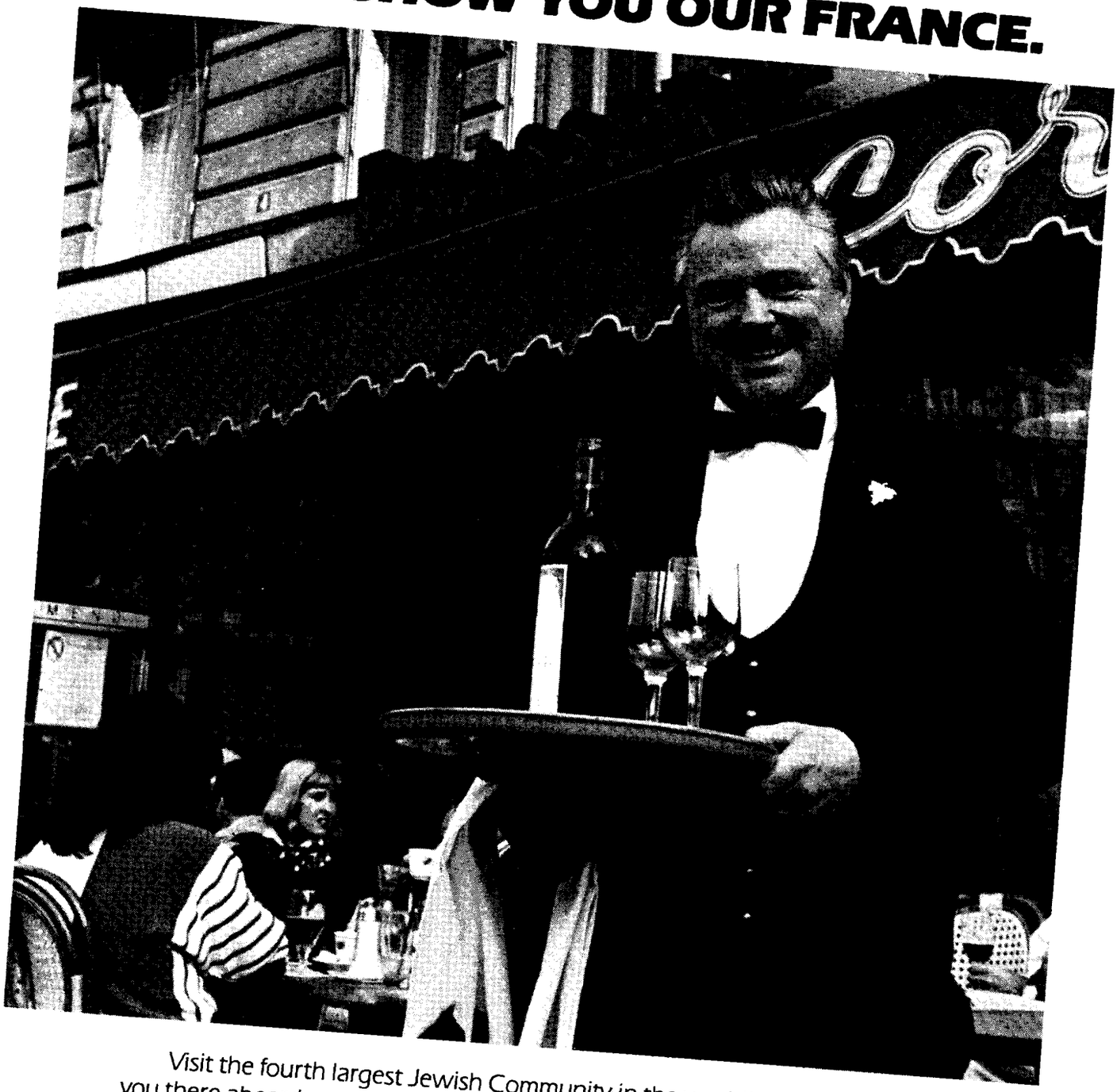

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BON VOYAGE AND SHALOM!

AIR FRANCE

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Education in Defense of a Free Society

Sidney Hook

As we approach the bicentenary of the American Constitution, it seems to me fitting and fruitful to explore two related themes in the intellectual legacy of Thomas Jefferson, the first philosopher-statesman of the fledgling American republic to call himself a democrat. These themes are, first, his conception of a free self-governing society; and second, his faith in the processes of education to guide, strengthen, and defend this free self-governing society from the dangers—internal and external—that might threaten its survival. Since Jefferson's own time, discussion of the relation between democracy and education has not been absent from political discourse, but as a rule, it has been subordinated to narrow curricular issues. Periodically, however, the question becomes focal whenever we seek, as we are doing today, to rethink, revise, and reform the educational establishment of the nation.

Jefferson was not a systematic thinker and his rhetoric sometimes carried him beyond the bounds of good sense. A revolution every twenty years or so, which he advocated to nourish the tree of liberty, would have destroyed the American republic long before the Civil War came near to doing so. Nor were all elements of his thought consistent. Jefferson once wrote that man was "the only animal which devours its own kind." Yet in the very passage in which man is so characterized, he declared that "were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate for a moment to prefer the latter." The case for a free press does not rest on such an absurd position, which overlooks the fact that in a state of anarchy, one without government, there would be no press at all. It would be destroyed by mob rule when it exercised its critical functions, as indeed happened during some stormy years of American history in various regions of the country. Of course, government is not a sufficient condition of a free press, but it is a necessary condition not only of press freedom but of any freedom. For how can any freedom be exercised unless those who would violate it are not free to do so?

Rhetorical excesses and logical inconsistencies apart, the most profound feature of Jefferson's political philosophy, and what all major political groups in American life today regard as possessing a perennially valid significance, is its emphasis on self-government. Self-government in Jefferson's conception has three central features. It is based on freely given or uncoerced consent. Secondly, freely given consent entails the guaranteed right to *dissent*, to wit, the freedoms of speech, press, association, and assembly, and all other freedoms legitimately derived from them. It is this feature that distinguishes the Jeffersonian, or modern, conception of self-government from the ancient and transient democratic orders of the past which recognized no limits on government power, and treated opponents within the democratic system as enemies. Finally, given the recognition of the right to dissent, a *sine qua non* of a self-governing community is the principle of majority rule. In the absence of a consensus, rarely to be expected in the inescapable conflicts of human interests and opinions, this rule is the only way to reach orderly decision and effect a peaceful succession of government. Jefferson stressed this, as did many years later the uncompromising individualist, William James. "The first principle of republicanism," writes Jefferson, "is that the *lex majoris partis* is the fundamental law of every society of individuals of equal rights. To consider the will of society enunciated by a single vote, as sacred as if unanimous, is the first of all lessons in importance. This law, once disregarded, no other remains but the use of force."

Jefferson was acutely aware, as are we all, that majorities may go astray, be injudicious, and even be morally tyrannical within the letter of the law. For this he had only one remedy: not the rule of presumably enlightened minorities, but the education of experience. His not unreasonable assumption is that, given access to knowl-

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edge, most adult human beings are better judges of their own interests than are others. However, to be able to learn effectively from their present experience, to make it available for their future experience, citizens should have access to education of a narrower kind—to schooling that develops the intellectual skills and imparts the relevant knowledge necessary to sustain a free society. The people themselves, Jefferson continually observes, are "the only safe depositories" of non-oppressive rightful government.

One may ask, of course, whether such government is not only safe, but whether it is sound, not only whether it is right, but whether it is good. Jefferson's reply indicates where he puts his faith: "To render them [the people] safe, their minds must be improved to a certain degree. This is indeed not all that is necessary though it be essentially necessary. An amendment of our Constitution must here come in aid of the public education. The influence on government must be shared by all the people."

How far we have come from the Jeffersonian faith that the people or their representatives are the only safe depositories of a free society is evidenced by current discussion of a constitutional convention. I am not a partisan of any particular measure advocated for the agenda of such a convention and I disapprove of most. But I am appalled at the reasons offered by some who oppose its convocation and who cry out in alarm that it will run amok and even abolish the Bill of Rights. No more flagrant contradiction of the Jeffersonian faith is imaginable than such a sentiment. It confidently predicts that measures threatening the foundations of a free society will not only be adopted by a majority of the delegates but also by three-quarters of our fifty states, and by both freely elected legislative assemblies in those states. If such a thing were to come to pass, it would certainly establish that a majority of citizens are either too obtuse or too vicious to be entrusted with self-government. And if this were indeed true, as some philosophers from Plato to Santayana have asserted, why should anyone be in favor of a politically free society? The current state of civic education and behavior is indeed deplorable. But the situation is not so far gone as to make the case for a free society a lost cause.

Far from fearing a constitutional convention, I believe its convocation, timed for our bicentenary, could become the occasion for a great historic debate. Reviewing and interpreting the experience of two centuries, it might strike a more adequate balance among the branches of our government and clarify some central ambiguities in present constitutional provisions that sometimes generate dangerous deadlocks.

JEFFERSON, as we know, was in advance of his time. He provided the rationale for the systems of public education that developed in the United States after his day, especially for instruction going beyond the fundamentals of literacy—reading, writing, and the arts of calculation. He even ventured on the outlines of a curriculum of studies, mainly based on science and history, to strengthen faith in a free society and safeguard it from the corruptions of human ambition and power.

Now suppose that, in the spirit of Jefferson, we wanted to devise an educational system that would indeed strengthen allegiance to our self-governing democratic society: how would we do this today? One possible way—consistent with Jefferson's own prescriptions—would be to modify our educational system so that its central emphasis became the detailed study of the sciences. But is there really any convincing reason to believe that this would result in an increase of support for a free self-governing society? After all, the subject matters and techniques of the sciences can be mastered in any kind of society. Even though it is true that the greatest burgeoning and bursts of creative discovery in science have occurred during the last two centuries in modern democratic countries, it does not tax our imagination to conceive a world in which, once political freedom has been lost, the sciences become not only the organon of continuous inquiry into nature but also the instrument of enforcing a cruel and ruthless despotism over society. The domination man exercises over nature has often been used to fasten bonds of domination over other men.

To be sure, as John Dewey often pointed out, there is much in the process of scientific inquiry —its openness, sense of evidence, tentativeness, and cooperative intelligence—that when carried over into the discussion and practice of human affairs vitalizes the free society. But Dewey also never ceased to remind us that, desirable as it is to carry over scientific methods in the pursuit and testing of human ends, science and politics differ in several crucial respects. For one thing, not everyone is qualified to be a scientist or has a right to a scientific judgment, while all citizens of a free society are deemed qualified to participate in determining judgments of political policy. Deny this and one is committed to the view of government by experts, which is incompatible with the premises of a self-governing society. For those premises imply that on crucial questions of policy one does not have to be an expert to judge the work of experts or choose among their oft-conflicting proposals.

Further, scientists are united in one overriding interest—the interest in the pursuit of truth; human affairs, on the other hand, are a field of conflicting interests. The agreements scientists reach are ultimately determined by the compulsions of fact; in human affairs, even when there is agreement on facts, the resolution of differences may require tolerance and compromise of interests. In

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a free society, it may be necessary to forgo demands for the full measure of justified claims in order to preserve the *process* by which future claims may be peacefully negotiated. Science develops by the elimination of error. But the life of a free society consists not so much in the elimination of interests as in their reconciliation. In science, a wrong judgment loses all value as soon as it is shown to be wrong; in a democracy, even the interest which is outvoted has value. It must be respected in defeat if only because it has submitted itself to the arbitrament of argument and persuasion.

In short, a curriculum concentrating entirely on science could not be expected to achieve the aim Jefferson sought. Not that Jefferson himself was a simple-minded believer in the effect of science and science education on the moral estate of humanity. He called freedom "the first-born daughter of science"; yet he was aware that science could "produce the bitter fruits of tyranny and rapine." He never wavered in his belief that through the diffusion of scientific knowledge the human condition could be advanced. And if by the advance of the human condition we mean the material improvement of the human estate, the extension of longevity, and the increase of our power over nature, none can gainsay him. Yet even if we grant the dubious proposition that all knowledge is good, surely not all of it is relevant for our political purpose. Henry Adams to the contrary notwithstanding, no law of physics has any bearing on the justification for a free society. Einstein's theory overthrew Newton's, not the Declaration of Independence.

It is a commonplace but an important one that it is not science and technology that are fateful to man, but the uses to which they are put. When we speak of uses, we imply purposes and ends, goals and policies. We therewith find ourselves in the realm of values. The humanities, broadly speaking, are concerned with the exploration of this realm. Though Jefferson prescribed a mainly scientific course of study for the intellectual elite, a curriculum built on the humanities is roughly what he had in mind for the ordinary citizen, whose studies should, he thought, be chiefly historical. Might not such a curriculum today provide what the sciences cannot—a strengthened faith in a free self-governing society?

I wish to declare at once that regardless of how we answer this question, the humanities—primarily the disciplines of language and literature, history, art, and philosophy—should have a central place in the education of *any* society. For their subject matter is perennial and transcends, even when it touches on, the temporalities of politics.

The reasons for this are manifest and heralded in many ways from ancient days to the present. The study of the humanities nurtures an understanding and appreciation of the great and often unfamiliar visions and modes of life. Within any mode of life, they present "the problems of the human heart in conflict with itself" (William Faulkner). They therefore embrace but go beyond the dimensions of the political and ideological. They strike no consensus. They have no flag or creed, even when they celebrate ways of life and death fought under warring battle cries. They take us out of ourselves and enable us to see with the eyes and minds of others, just as we become aware of the reach and power of others in us. Define the humanities and limit their concerns for curricular purposes as one will, their cultivation leads to the permanent enrichment of the internal landscape of the mind in any clime or social station. For they provide an ever renewed source of delight, consolation, insight, sometimes hope.

Surely this is merit enough to justify the place of the humanities in any curriculum of liberal studies. Surely this justifies us in maintaining that their absence is the sign of a truncated, one-sided, and impoverished education—whatever other virtues such education may have.

Nonetheless, we cannot honestly maintain that the study of the humanities of itself generates allegiance to the free society. Two considerations prevent us from doing so. The first is the historical fact that the student population of Western Europe, who until recently were brought up in their *lycées* and *gymnasia* largely on classical studies, were certainly not noteworthy for their ardor and enthusiasm for free democratic societies. Indeed, not infrequently in countries like Spain, Italy, France, and Germany, it was students who provided the intellectual shock troops for anti-democratic movements.

There is a second troubling reason why we cannot maintain that an organic relationship exists between the humanist tradition in life and letters and commitment to the free or liberal society. This is the fact that many of the monumental writers of the past regarded the promise of democratic progress as a threat to the life of the mind and to the creative spirit, as the political gloss on the mechanisms that were leveling and standardizing culture and taste. No one can reasonably dispute the record. From the age of Plato to the present, the dominating figures in the humanistic disciplines have been critical of, sometimes even hostile to, the extension of political power to the masses, even when safeguards against the excesses of popular sovereignty have been adopted. In the 19th century, writers like Dickens, George Eliot, and Shelley were sympathetic to the advance of the democratic idea, but their influence was more than counterbalanced by Wordsworth, Balzac, Goethe, Dostoevsky, and many others. In our own time, such major literary figures as T.S. Eliot, Yeats, Pound,

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Faulkner, and D.H. Lawrence typify the distrust and suspicion of democratic society prevalent among the creative vanguard.

Why there should be this "adversary" relationship, as Lionel Trilling called it, between the sympathies and values of so many great humanists and the democratic tendencies of their culture, and why there should be a corresponding bias toward the aristocratic tradition, is hard to explain. A partial answer may lie in the greater receptivity among aristocratic classes to the novel and experimental than is generally found in the larger public. ("Nothing is so foreign to the plain man," observes Santayana, "as the corrupt desire for simplicity.") To this may be added the fact that where the people are sovereign they have sometimes been less tolerant of heresies that challenge accepted beliefs than have some benevolent despotisms, which under the mantle of a patronizing *Narrenfreiheit*, the freedom accorded to the court jester, sometimes sheltered purveyors of doctrines dangerous to the state.

Whatever the explanation, we cannot plausibly deny that the outstanding humanist figures have rarely been protagonists of the ordered freedoms we associate with democratic life and republican virtue in a self-governing society. The growth of such a society in the West owes more to the dissident, nonconformist religious sects, to the agitation and battles of the early trade unions and other manifestations of class struggle than to the classical humanist tradition. It was not a scholar inspired by Plato or Aristotle, Aquinas or Dante, or any figures of the Renaissance, but a spokesman of the Protestant Levellers who proclaimed that "the poorest he that is in England has a life to live as the greatest he," and therefore argued for the right "to choose those who are to make the laws for them to live under."

In pointing to the considerations that prevent us from making the easy inference that a liberal-arts education centered around the study of the humanities is integral to the existence and survival of a liberal society, I do not mean to suggest that there is a simple causal relation between curricular study and political behavior. A contemporary literary critic (George Steiner) has written in a tone of bitter discovery: "We know now that a man can read Goethe and Rilke in the evening, that he can play Bach and Schubert, and go to his day's work at Auschwitz in the morning." But he could have added that those who studied Euclid and Newton also built the crematoria at Auschwitz. And he undoubtedly is aware that those in previous times who led the massacres of innocents in their holy wars against heretics or infidels invoked the blessings of the God of love on their dedicated work. This is an old story. The face of evil can wear the mask of learning. The devil can play the role not only of a gentleman but of a scholar—but this does not make learning or manners evil or less desirable. The guilt of a criminal does not stain the means by which he commits or conceals his crime. As well maintain that the abuse of language is an argument for permanent silence.

Moreover, after one has said everything there is to be said to the contrary, there still remains at least some positive connection between the rationale of a free society and the great expressions of the human spirit in art and literature. Regardless of their specific political orientation, these works are usually animated by a passion or vision of opposition to the customary. They move by challenging complacency. They are essentially nonconformist. To reach their mark they must disturb, upset, and sometimes frighten.

To the extent, then, that a free society thrives on diversity, the play and struggle of varied perspectives, the dialectic of confrontation, it *is* served by the humanities, just as in turn the free society often serves the humanities better than the authoritarian societies some humanists tend to favor. For a free society offers an unlimited theater for works of the spirit to develop, in contrast with authoritarian societies that always in some crucial area of the mind invoke the Augustinian dictum that "error has no rights," as a bar to further inquiry and experiment.

To be sure, free societies sometimes sin against the light of cultural freedom. But when they do, they are violating their own ethos. Conversely, some unfree societies may tolerate, even encourage, experiment and variation in some restricted area, but never in all the realms of the human spirit. I am struck by a story told about General de Gaulle. In refusing to endorse the arrest of Sartre for an infraction of the law, he is reputed to have said: "In a free society one does not arrest Voltaire." Sartre was no Voltaire, and he was to boot an apologist for Stalinism; but we know what his fate would have been as a dissident under a Stalinist regime.

I do not want to go beyond the modest claim that there is no essential or necessary hostility between the humanities and a free society, and that there need be no conflict between a love of the humanities and a commitment to liberal democracy. But I believe I have also shown that a curriculum concentrating on the humanities can no more be expected to achieve the Jeffersonian objective of strengthening faith in the free society than a curriculum based on the sciences.

I HAVE brought up Jefferson's ideas about the relation between education and freedom not out of an academic concern with those ideas, but rather in the hope that examining them might yield some guidance in dealing with our urgent contemporary crisis. It is a crisis that threatens the very survival of a free self-governing society in the United States. For it consists precisely of an eroding allegiance to the ideals of a free self-governing society itself. It

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would require volumes to document the failure to abide by the democratic ethos in American life today. Restricting ourselves only to phenomena observable without enlisting batteries of research teams to report on them, we find: (1) the vehement assertion of rights and entitlements without the acceptance of corresponding duties and obligations; (2) the invocation of group rights to justify overriding the rights of individuals; (3) the growth of violence, and the tolerance of violence, in schools and local assemblies; (4) the open defiance of laws authorized by democratic process, and the indulgence of courts toward repeated and unrepentant violators; (5) the continued invasion by the courts themselves into the legislative process; (6) the loss of faith in the electorate as the ultimate custodian of its own freedom.

Each reflective observer can make his own list of the multiple threats from *within* our own society to the health, security, and civility of the processes of self-government. However conceived, they raise the question of whether we possess the basic social cohesion and solidarity today to survive the challenge to our society from *without*, particularly that posed by the global expansion of Communism. Although there are different views of the immediacy and magnitude of the Communist threat to the free world, it is plain political folly to deny its existence. The map of the world from 1945 to the present bears witness to the fact that the policy of containment, initiated by President Truman after the Baruch-Lilienthal and the Marshall Plan had been rejected by the Kremlin, does not contain.

The threat of Communist expansion is compounded by the fear that the defensive use of nuclear weapons will result in a nuclear holocaust. The artful, unremitting, and often unscrupulous propaganda by fanatical groups, exemplified by television programs like *The Day After* and by terrifying classroom scenarios on every level of our school system from kindergarten to university, has generated a mood of fear not far removed from hysteria. The fallout from this sustained propaganda has often short-circuited reflection. It has led to the mistaken belief in some circles that we are confronted by the stark alternatives of unilateral disarmament or inevitable war, and to a disregard of the well-grounded position that an effective deterrent is the best way of preserving peace without sacrificing freedom. Clarity, however, requires recognition that to renounce in advance the retaliatory use of a deterrent is to proclaim in effect that we have no deterrent, thus inviting the very aggression the policy of deterrence was designed to discourage.

In our precarious world every policy has risks. What shall we risk for freedom? What shall we sacrifice for mere survival? If our nation were confronted by a nuclear ultimatum, would there be enough loyalty to a free society to generate the necessary resolution to cope with the threats without bluster or paralyzing panic? To many the answer seems doubtful, and this in itself is an alarming sign of the state of the national mind. Past generalizations about the American character are no guide, whether drawn from de Tocqueville, Whitman, or Lord Bryce.

WHAT then must be done? Not long ago our President proposed and our Congress approved the organization of a National Endowment for Democracy to encourage the spread of democratic forces abroad. As welcome as such a program is, I submit that it is even more necessary to organize a National Endowment for Democracy at home. The first goal of such an endowment would be to develop programs to study the basic elements of a free society, and suggest them as required parts of instruction on every educational level.

Today it is widely agreed that fundamental educational reforms are needed to improve the levels of skill and literacy of American students so that they may cope with the present and future problems arising from multiple changes in our complex world. Agreeing with this proposition, I am suggesting that it is just as important to sharpen the students' understanding of a free society, its responsibilities and opportunities, the burdens and dangers it faces. Instead of relying primarily on the sciences and humanities to inspire loyalty to the processes of self-government, we should seek to develop that loyalty directly through honest inquiry into the functioning of a democratic community, by learning its history, celebrating its heroes, and noting its achievements. Integral to the inquiry would be the intensive study of the theory and practice of contemporary totalitarian societies, especially the fate of human rights in those areas where Communism has triumphed.

The first retort to such a proposal is sure to be that it is just a variant of the propaganda and indoctrination we find so objectionable in Communist society. As to propaganda, Karl Jaspers somewhere says that the truth sometimes needs propaganda—a dark saying. I interpret it to mean that we require courage to defend the truth when challenged and the skills both to make it more persuasive and to combat its distortions. But as to indoctrination, the retort misses the basic difference between the open and closed society. This lies not in the presence or absence of indoctrination, but in the presence or absence of the critical, questioning spirit. Indoctrination is the process by which assent to belief is induced by non-rational means, and *all* education in *all* societies at home and in school *in the tender years* is based on it. The habits of character, hygiene, elementary sociality and morality are acquired by indoctrination and become the

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basis of all further learning. In a free society, however, such methods are, and always should be, accompanied by, and gradually become subordinate to, the methods of reflective, critical thought at every appropriate level. When students achieve greater maturity they are able to assess for themselves step by step the validity of the beliefs and the justifications of the habits in which they have been nurtured. A free society not only permits but encourages questioning, commensurate with the intellectual powers of students, as integral to learning.

In a closed society indoctrination induces assent by irrational as well as non-rational means, beyond the early years, and throughout the entire course of study in all except certain technical areas. It never permits a critical study of its first principles and the alternatives to them. The unfree society regards its subjects as in a permanent state of political childhood; it controls what they read and hear by a monopoly of all means of communication. The free society can live with honest doubt and with faith in itself short of certainty. Skeptical of perfect solutions, it eschews the quest for absolutes. In contrast with the closed society, it can live with the truth about itself.

I am not making the utopian claim that anything we do in the schools today will of itself redeem or rebuild our society. Continued institutional changes must be made to strengthen the stake of all groups in freedom. But of this I am convinced. In our pluralistic, multi-ethnic, uncoordinated society, no institutional changes of themselves will develop that bond of community we need to sustain our nation in times of crisis without a prolonged schooling in the history of our free society, its martyrology, and its national tradition. In the decades of mass immigration in the 19th and 20th centuries that bond was largely forged by the American public school. What I propose is that our schools, reinforced by our colleges and universities, do the same job today in a more intelligent, critical, and sophisticated way.

There was a time when most Americans understood that the free self-governing society bequeathed to them by Jefferson and the other founding fathers was the "last best hope on earth." If anything, the experience of the 20th century, and especially of the past fifty years, should have made that truth even more evident than it was to Jefferson himself. During that period, our own society has been able to make gigantic strides in the direction of greater freedom, prosperity, and social justice, while its totalitarian enemies—first Nazi Germany and then the Soviet Union—have produced war and holocaust, economic misery, cultural starvation, and concentration camps. Yet in spite of that record, the paradox is that faith and belief in the principles of liberal democracy have declined in the United States. Unless that faith and that belief can be restored and revivified, liberal democracy will perish. Jefferson thought that proper education was necessary to the birth and establishment of a free society. He would not have been surprised to discover that it is also necessary to its perpetuation, and indeed to its very survival.

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The Political Dilemma of American Jews

Irving Kristol

Jews have a long history, and with that long history goes a long memory. So it is entirely to be expected that the political loyalties and habits of mind of a Jewish community should change very slowly—so slowly, sometimes, that an odd divergence can occur between Jewish thinking and the developing social, political, and economic realities. It is not so much that Jews do not see what is going on; they just do not believe it when they do see it. In politics, seeing is not always believing. Memories, and the cast of mind into which those memories become encrusted—one can fairly call it an ideological cast of mind—often enough will not only obscure the reality but will actually prevail over it for a surprisingly long time.

Something of this sort, it seems to me, is happening in the American Jewish community today. Over the past two decades, the political landscape with which American Jews are familiar, and in which they are accustomed to take their bearings, has been shifting in all sorts of unexpected ways. A sense of disorientation has slowly been pervading the political consciousness of American Jews, causing uneasiness and discomfort. Inevitably and understandably, the initial reaction, and still the dominant reaction, is that such changes are superficial and transient, and that the old, familiar markers will enable one to make one's way. But beneath this reaction is the growing apprehension that perhaps this is not so —that perhaps the political geography of the United States has undergone a more basic realignment of its features, and that it is time for a reorientation.

Erik Erikson, in his biography of Luther, defines three critical stages in the life cycle of an individual. The first is a crisis in identity, the second a crisis of conscience (involving one's responsibility to others), and the third a crisis of integrity (a coming to terms with historical actuality). The American Jewish community is in the process of experiencing all these life-cycle crises simultaneously. No wonder there is so much bewilderment and anxiety.

Let us look at three changes in the American political landscape that were not anticipated, and that are now contributing to these crises.

1.

The most striking change has been the emergence of Jesse Jackson as *the* political leader of American blacks. Jackson stands for black nationalism—what the media mindlessly persist in calling "black pride"—with a dash of anti-Semitism added for good measure. He is *not* a "civil-rights" leader of the familiar kind, only somewhat more militant. He has radically redefined the role of black political leadership in this country. Even if he should pass from the scene, for one reason or another, there will be no reversion to the *status quo ante*. He has, with extraordinary entrepreneurial skill, shown the way, and there will be plenty of others eager to follow.

This was not supposed to happen. American Jews had anticipated a quite different scenario to emerge from the civil-rights movement, in which they were so deeply involved. That involvement was natural because Jews, as a religious and ethnic minority, have for centuries experienced a deprivation of civil rights and are therefore keenly aware of how important it is that equality in civil rights be enjoyed by all minorities—religious, ethnic, or racial. This explains why, for most of the history of the NAACP and the Urban League, Jewish money played such a large role in keeping those institutions afloat. It also explains why so many individual Jews participated so energetically, over these past twenty years, in the civil-rights movement itself.

That movement was victorious. What are now called civil-rights issues are marginal legal quarrels, and more often than not involve women rather than blacks. So far as civil rights, traditionally understood, are concerned, there now exists a comprehensive body of law, emerging from either Congress or the courts, which defines and protects the rights of blacks. The very fact that such cities as Chicago, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Atlanta, and Birmingham—Birming-

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ham!—now have black mayors pretty much tells the story.

Nor is it surprising that these black mayors were elected with Jewish support, which in some cases was decisive. For until yesterday, relations between the Jewish community and the official black leadership continued to be most amiable. In Congress, black Congressmen usually voted "correctly," from the Jewish point of view, on Israel, while Jewish Congressmen usually voted "correctly" on domestic legislation that the black leadership endorsed. The black-Jewish political coalition outlasted the civil-rights movement itself, and there seemed no reason why it should not endure.

The strength of the attachment of Jews—or perhaps one should say of the major Jewish organizations and their leaders—to this coalition is best revealed by the debate over affirmative action. Affirmative action has come to be judicially and bureaucratically defined in terms of racial and ethnic quotas in hiring and firing—what has been called "positive discrimination." This is utterly repugnant, in principle, to Jews. Indeed, Jews had always felt so keenly about this sort of thing that they had fought long and hard, and in the end successfully, to prevent the introduction of religious identification in the census. To this day, all major Jewish organizations are on record as supporting "affirmative action" in the original sense of encouraging the advancement of minorities, but remain opposed to quotas. Nevertheless, once the definition of affirmative action as implying quotas became an issue of considerable importance to the black leadership, the major Jewish organizations split on whether to oppose it outright in the courts—so powerful was the desire of Jewish leaders to continue cooperating with their black counterparts.

SO WHAT went wrong. Where did Jesse Jackson come from, and why?

Well, coincident with the civil-rights movement, another social-political phenomenon occurred that was of great significance to the black community. This was the construction, by Congress, of an extensive (and expensive) range of social programs, under the rubric of the "Great Society." These programs were intended to repair the social and economic condition of American blacks, even while their political condition was being elevated to the plane of equality by the civil-rights movement. And even as the civil-rights movement succeeded, the Great Society programs failed—at least as far as most blacks were concerned. Out of this failure, Jesse Jackson emerged.

It is not to be thought that the Great Society programs were simply a waste of money. Some were, some were not. But where benefits did occur, it was largely the middle class that enjoyed them. Much of the population of the black ghettos was in no condition to exploit those benefits. It is nice to provide free lunches for poor schoolchildren, and it is unquestionably nice for the nutritionists, the food-service industry, and the farmers. But what availeth that free lunch to a black mother if her son, at the same time, gets hooked on drugs or is involved in criminal activities, while her teen-age daughter becomes pregnant? The sad truth is that the social disorganization and individual demoralization within the black ghettos have overwhelmed whatever positive effects those social programs were expected to have, or even might have had.

And there is good reason to think that the Great Society programs themselves had something to do with this social disorganization and individual demoralization. It may not be literally true that dependency (like power) tends to corrupt and that absolute dependency (like absolute power) tends to corrupt absolutely. But there is truth enough in that proposition to give pause. After all, how else explain the fact that the increasing breakdown of the black ghetto family and the proliferation of all sorts of social and individual pathologies parallel so neatly, in time and place, the institution of all those social programs? The people who devised, legislated, and applied these programs surely expected no such consequences and are now at a loss for an explanation. It is reasonable, however, to take seriously the possibility that the two phenomena have a causal connection.

In any case, it is out of the frustration of the black ghetto—frustration arising from the fact that neither the winning of political civil rights nor the enactment of those Great Society programs transformed or even ameliorated the condition of the black ghettos—that Jesse Jackson has built his mass appeal. It is worth recalling that, before becoming a candidate, he spoke with refreshing candor of the need for blacks to help themselves rather than relying on white handouts that left them mired in poverty and misery. This was not a theme that the established black leadership had the courage to enunciate. But apparently there was greater political potential in black nationalism than in black self-help, and Jackson himself has by now substituted the former for the latter.

The frustration of ghetto blacks, moreover, is as sharply felt by that portion of the black population—about half—whose condition has dramatically improved over the past decades. Racial solidarity is as natural a feeling as religious or ethnic, so it is not surprising that many middle-class blacks, especially the young and upwardly mobile, are sympathetic to Jesse Jackson. Nor is it surprising that the older, established black leadership has been so utterly disarmed before his campaign. They, after all, had bet all their chips on the civil-rights struggle and the Great Society programs. Confronted with the enduring,

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brutal realities of ghetto life today, they are mute and impotent.

The upshot is that the long alliance between Jewish and black organizations is coming apart. Jesse Jackson has substituted Arab money for Jewish money. In foreign policy he is pro-Third World and anti-American, pro-PLO and anti-Israel—and he is on the way to making this the quasi-official foreign policy of the black community. In domestic policy he is vaguely, but unambiguously, well to the Left of anything that one could call "liberal." And his role in future elections, which is bound to be significant, will only make things worse. He has already indicated that he will be coming to New York in 1985 to back and stump for a properly militant black candidate against Mayor Koch in the Democratic primaries. The black-Jewish polarization that would ensue is almost too scary to contemplate.

2.

The rise of the Moral Majority is another new feature of the American landscape that baffles Jews. They did not expect it, do not understand it, and do not know what to do about it.

One of the reasons—perhaps the main reason—they do not know what to do about it is the fact that the Moral Majority is strongly pro-Israel. To say this was unexpected is a wild understatement. If one had informed American Jews fifteen years ago that there was to be a powerful revival of Protestant fundamentalism, and as a political as well as religious force, they would surely have been alarmed, since they would have assumed that any such revival might tend to be anti-Semitic and anti-Israel. But the Moral Majority is neither.

To be sure, occasionally a fundamentalist preacher will say something to the effect that God cannot be expected to heed the prayers of non-Protestant fundamentalists. At which point many Jewish organizations react in a predictable way: they sound the alarm against an incipient anti-Semitism. But the alarm rings hollow. After all, why should Jews care about the theology of a fundamentalist preacher when they do not for a moment believe that he speaks with any authority on the question of God's attentiveness to human prayer? And what do such theological abstractions matter as against the mundane fact that this same preacher is vigorously pro-Israel?

Some Jews, enmeshed in the liberal time warp, refuse to take this mundane fact seriously. They are wrong. Just how wrong they are can be seen by asking the question: how significant would it be for American Jews if the Moral Majority were *anti*-Israel? The answer is easy and inescapable: it would be of major significance. Indeed, it would generally be regarded by Jews as a very alarming matter. So it is ironic, and puzzling, that American Jews appear to be not all that interested in, and certainly not enthusiastic about, the fact that the Moral Majority is unequivocally pro-Israel.

One reason for the peculiar Jewish reaction here is that this phenomenon does not fall into the spectrum of the familiar and expected. But there are other reasons too, of considerable significance in their own way. For the Moral Majority is simultaneously committed to a set of "social issues"—school prayer, anti-abortion, the relation of church and state in general—that tend to evoke a hostile reaction among most (though not all) American Jews. How does one go about balancing the pros and cons of this matter? And to what degree is this hostile reaction itself worthy of some second thoughts?

That balancing should not, in truth, require much intellectual effort. From a purely expediential point of view, it is obvious that the campaign of the Moral Majority around these "social issues" is meeting with practically no success, and so there is little reason for Jewish alarm. Neither Congress nor (more important) the judiciary is at all forthcoming, and the Reagan administration has got absolutely nowhere in its espousal of these issues. In contrast, anti-Israel sentiment has been distinctly on the rise, and the support of the Moral Majority could, in the near future, turn out to be decisive for the very existence of the Jewish state. This is the way the Israeli government has struck its own balance vis-à-vis the Moral Majority, and it is hard to see why American Jews should come up with a different bottom line.

But the expediential point of view is not enough if the Moral Majority's support of Israel is not to wither and die on the vine. That will happen if it continues to evoke so muffled and embarrassed a response from the Amerian Jewish community. American Jews really do need to revise their thinking about some, at least, of these controversial social issues, even from the point of view of expediency. Moreover, it is becoming ever more clear that it is time they did so in any case, Moral Majority or no Moral Majority.

Ever since the Holocaust and the emergence of the state of Israel, American Jews have been reaching toward a more explicit and meaningful Jewish identity and have been moving away from the universalist secular humanism that was so prominent a feature of their prewar thinking. But while American Jews want to become more Jewish, they do not want American Christians to become more Christian. This is an untenable point of view.

First, because of the hypocrisy involved. Why should there be a Hanukkah candelabrum at Central Park, as there is, but no Christmas crèche? Second, because the quest for a religious identity is not confined to Jews. It is, in the post-

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war world, a general phenomenon experienced by Jews, Christians, and Muslims alike. It does not seem, moreover, to be a passing phenomenon but rather derives from an authentic crisis—a moral and spiritual crisis as well as a crisis in Western liberal-secular thought. Is there any point in Jews hanging on, dogmatically and hypocritically, to their opinions of yesteryear when it is a new era we are confronting? Is it not time for Jews to sit back, curb their habitual reflexes about the "proper" relations of state and religion in the United States, and think seriously about how they can most comfortably exist (and survive) in a world in which religious identity will become increasingly important? In short, is it not time for an agonizing reappraisal?

3.

THE relation of American Jews to American foreign policy is, every day, becoming more and more bizarre, more and more tormented by self-contradiction. It is a situation that cannot last. Sooner or later, American Jews are going to have to make very hard choices —hard, because they will go against a deeply imprinted grain.

To select one issue that is profoundly symptomatic because it touches on such a sensitive ideological nerve: the United Nations and the attitude of our major Jewish organizations to it.

We all know—one would have to be deaf and dumb not to know—that the UN is, above all, an organization bent on delegitimizing, even eventually destroying, the state of Israel. More than half the time, the UN and its associated organizations are busy pursuing this mission. The rest of the time they are preoccupied with serving as a forum for a Third World critique of the United States, and of the West in general, of which Israel is perceived (correctly) to be an integral part. "Zionism is racism" is a doctrine officially proclaimed by the UN, while at no time has the UN shown the slightest interest in protecting the rights of Jews (and other minorities) in the Soviet Union or in Muslim nations.

It would seem to follow logically that the American Jewish community should be hostile to the UN, should like to see the United States dissociate itself from it to the greatest possible degree, should even wish to see it vanish from our political horizon. Why not, after all? But logic, apparently, plays very little role in defining Jewish attitudes toward the United Nations. Nostalgia for what it was once hoped the UN would be is stronger than the clear perception of what the UN indubitably is. If ever there was a case of a group of people desperately evading the most obvious of political realities, this is it.

To be sure, Jews (like most other Americans) are full of admiration for Daniel Patrick Moynihan or Jeane Kirkpatrick when they boldly stand up for Israel—and America—at the UN. They are honored with plaques, scrolls, honorary degrees, banquets, etc. But that is as far as it goes. Just let anyone suggest that the Jewish reaction to the UN, as it now exists, should go somewhat farther and, suddenly, all the Jewish organizations have lost their tongue.

When efforts are made in Congress to cut the American financial contribution to the UN—we now provide 25 percent of the budget—the American Jewish community remains on the sidelines. When the Reagan administration decided to withdraw from that scandalous entity called UNESCO, the American Jewish community could think of nothing supportive to say, at least openly. Even Ambassador Charles Lichenstein's semi-jocular remark to the effect that, if the UN wished to relocate its headquarters elsewhere, he would be on the dock waving an enthusiastic farewell, was greeted by the Jewish community with a frigid silence. Meanwhile, the United Nations Association, along with other organizations that "educate" people toward a "positive" view of the UN, are financed most generously by Jewish contributors.

Here the discrepancy between the reality and Jewish ideological obstinacy is positively stunning. The UN has become a very different organization from what Jews and Jewish organizations, in the immediate postwar years, anticipated and hoped it would be. They certainly never expected that the covenant against "genocide," for which American Jewry lobbied in the UN so persistently and, finally, successfully, would serve as a basis for attacks against Israel, as it is, repeatedly. The actuality has diverged wildly from the dream. But the dream still exercises its dominion over the Jewish imagination.

The vision of a "community of nations" living peaceably under international law, so eloquently articulated by Immanuel Kant in the 18th century, has been an organic part of the ideology of Western liberalism ever since. It has had a special appeal to Jews, both because of its biblical roots and because Jews, as Jews, would obviously be much more secure and comfortable in such a world. No single ethnic or religious group in the United States has produced such a disproportionate number of scholars in the field of international law as have Jews, and no other group has been so reluctant to recognize that this messianic vision, when applied to political actualities, has proved to be political utopianism, wishful thinking.

It is not that international law itself is in essence utopian. The emergence, in the two centuries *preceding* Kant, of principles of decent international behavior was a genuine contribution toward making international relations less anarchic, less "Machiavellian," less casually brutal than they had been or otherwise would have been. But this *pre*-Kantian conception of inter-

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national law was much more modest in its ambitions and more realistic in its assumptions than the notion of international law we are familiar with. It recognized, for instance, that the intervention of nations in the affairs of other nations was both proper and inevitable under certain conditions, and that the violation of national frontiers could not always be classified as immoral "aggression." To the degree that international law has any substantial meaning in the world today, it rests on this pre-Kantian basis rather than on the kind of grandiose principles associated with the League of Nations and the United Nations.*

An extraordinary number of Jews, however, remain loyal to those grandiose principles. As a result, their thinking about foreign affairs is incoherent to an equally extraordinary degree. When Israel bombed and destroyed the Iraqi nuclear reactor most American Jews realized that this was a sensible thing to do and that there was nothing "illegal" or "immoral" about the act—but they could not figure out a way to say this. Approval at the personal level was matched by embarrassed double-talk at the official level as Jewish leaders tried to talk their way out of a rhetorical trap of their own construction.

In addition to incoherence, there is positive schizophrenia. All Jews would be pleased if Ronald Reagan were publicly to reproach the Soviet Union on the issue of Jewish emigration, but would be less happy if his reproach were aimed at the suppression of all religious freedoms under that "godless" regime. This, it is felt, might be construed as undue intervention in Soviet Russia's internal affairs, and might "worsen international tensions," "aggravate the cold war," etc., etc.

One can muddle through with such incoherence and schizophrenia for a while, but sooner or later the world demands that one talk sense. Such a demand is being imposed on American Jews today. The older liberal internationalism, which was the basis of American foreign policy after the end of World War II and the basis of our membership in the United Nations, is rapidly disintegrating. The Third World uses the UN when it can, ignores it when convenient. So do the Soviet Union and the other Communist countries. There is no "community of nations," and the grand principles of the UN Charter are cynically abused for the purposes of *Realpolitik*. The United States is being forced to choose between being an active, great power in the world as it exists, or gradually retiring into a quasi-isolationism that leaves our moral purity undefiled and the world to its own devices.

The Democratic party today, and especially its most liberal wing, is clearly moving toward this second alternative. It is a movement made all the easier by the unspoken (because uneasy) liberal assumption that left-wing totalitarian movements, paying lip-service to principles that have a superficial affinity with liberal ideas, will evolve into less totalitarian and more liberal regimes. This assumption flies in the face of the fact that the most evident political reality of the 20th century is the revolt *against* the liberal economic and political order and the liberal ideal of self-government. That this revolt is sometimes explicitly "reactionary" or sometimes "progressive" in its political metaphysics is of interest to historians of ideas, but has little bearing on the construction of foreign policy. Indeed, what is most striking in recent decades is the *convergence* between yesteryear's totalitarian governments of the Right and today's totalitarian regimes of the Left. The similarities between Castro's Cuba and Mussolini's Italy are far more striking than their differences.

Isolationism has a strong traditional appeal to the American people and one can understand why it should reemerge today, or why the prospect of fighting "dirty little wars" in remote places should be so repugnant. What is difficult to understand is why American Jews seem to be among those who are not shocked and appalled by this new trend. Can anyone believe that an American government which, in righteous moralistic *hauteur*, refuses to intervene to prevent a Communist takeover of Central America, will intervene to counterbalance Soviet participation in an assault on Israel? Can anyone believe that the American people could make sense of such contradictory behavior? Yet a large number of American Jews, perhaps even a majority, appear to believe it.

Have these Jews taken leave of their reason? Of course not. It is simply that their thinking is beclouded by anachronistic presuppositions about the kind of world we live in and about the appropriate responses by the United States to the kind of world we live in. This *real* world is rife with conflict and savagery. It is a world in which liberalism is very much on the defensive, in which public opinion runs in the grooves established by power, in which people back winners not losers, and in which winners not losers provide the models of the future. In such a world, we are constrained to take our allies where and how we find them—even if they are authoritarian (e.g., Turkey), even if they are totalitarian (e.g., China).

If American Jews truly wish to be noninterventionist, they have to cease being so concerned with Israel, with Jews in the Soviet Union, or indeed with Jews anywhere else. To demand that

* This older, but still modern, conception of international law is very clearly laid out in Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* (1515). Its most thoughtful application is to be found in John Stuart Mill's essay, "A Few Words on Non-Intervention" (1859). The occasion was Russian intervention in Hungary (!) and the problem was the appropriate British response. It is an essay whose conclusions are quite consistent with the Reagan administration's policies in Central America.

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an American government be interventionist exclusively on behalf of Jewish interests and none other—well, to state that demand is to reveal its absurdity. Yet most of our major Jewish organizations have ended up maneuvering themselves into exactly this position. They cannot even bring themselves openly to support the indispensable precondition for the exercise of American influence on behalf of Jewish interests in the world: a large and powerful military establishment that can, if necessary, fight and win dirty, little (or not so little) wars in faraway places. It is the winning or losing of such wars that will determine the kind of world our children inherit—not striking pious postures or exuding moralistic rhetoric.

4.

To quote Erik Erikson once again:

> In some period of his history, and in some phases of his life cycle, man needs a new ideological orientation as surely and as sorely as he must have light and air.

Today is such a period for the American Jewish community. For two centuries, Western Jewry has been wedded to the intellectual traditions and political movements that had their roots in the Enlightenment. This was understandable and inevitable, since it was this current of thought and these movements—liberal or Left-of-liberal—which achieved religious toleration and civic equality for Jews. Conservative thinkers and conservative political parties tended to be hostile to Jewish aspirations, or at best coolly indifferent. In the United States, founded as it was in the flush of Enlightenment enthusiasm, the division between liberalism and conservatism was never that pregnant with meaning for Jews. Nevertheless, as relatively new immigrants, Jews found liberal opinion and liberal politicians more congenial in their attitudes, more sensitive to Jewish concerns. For the most part they still do. The kind of social discrimination—in country clubs, business luncheon clubs, within the corporate community generally—that Jews experience even today is generally at the hands of people who express conservative opinions and are likely to vote Republican. This form of discrimination affects only a fraction of the Jewish population—but that fraction includes those upper-middle-class, affluent Jews who are active in community affairs and provide the leadership of Jewish organizations.

Still, the world changes and will continue to change no matter how stubbornly Jews stick their heads in the sand and hope that yesteryear's realities will return. The American Jewish community needs the light of reason and the refreshing air of candid discourse if the world is not to pass it by. It must begin to see things as they are, not as it would like them to be.

One of the things it must see, on the domestic level, is that the liberal consensus and the liberal coalition that have dominated American politics since the inauguration of Franklin D. Roosevelt are disintegrating—at least so far as Jews are concerned. The blacks may or may not remain members of this coalition—one presumes they probably will—but if they do, it will be on a new set of terms. Though a great many Jews will gallantly try to swallow these terms, in the end the American Jewish community will gag on them. Can anyone doubt that, henceforth, the black caucus in Congress will be inclined to think that military or economic aid for Israel can be better spent for social programs in the ghettos? This is what Jesse Jackson thinks, this is what he says, and what Jesse Jackson thinks and says today is what the black caucus will think and say tomorrow. And can anyone doubt that, under a Mondale or Hart Presidency, our next ambassador to the UN will be more like Andrew Young than Jeane Kirkpatrick? All of these terms have been set by Jesse Jackson, and he means them most seriously. He must mean them seriously if he is to maintain his political leadership of the black community. His mission has been to incorporate a Third World view of politics into the American political spectrum, especially into the portion of that spectrum dealing with foreign affairs, and if he cannot do this within the Democratic party he will either desert that party or his enthusiastic followers will desert him. His die is cast.

But the increasing and tragic polarization between blacks and Jews is only one feature of the disengagement of the liberal coalition from Jewish interests. Another is the changes that are occurring in one of the traditional bastions of that coalition, namely, the trade unions. This reality is masked by the fact that the current head of the AFL-CIO, Lane Kirkland, is an old-fashioned liberal, a Henry Jackson type of liberal—in short, the kind of liberal Jews have cooperated with so amiably in the past. But Kirkland, alas, is not forever, and one can already see the ground shifting beneath his feet. It is, so far as American Jews are concerned, an ominous shift.

To begin with, there is the little noticed fact that the so-called "Jewish unions" are on the verge of disappearing. The Amalgamated Clothing Workers, the International Ladies Garment Workers, the American Federation of Teachers still have Jewish leaders with close ties to the Jewish community. But their membership is already overwhelmingly black, Hispanic, and Oriental, and future leaders will have no reason to be especially concerned with Jewish issues.

Meanwhile, organized labor itself is moving away from the nonpolitical tradition of Samuel Gompers and is developing closer official ties with the Democratic party. As this happens, the unions themselves naturally take on the ideo-

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logical coloration of their political allies. If one wants to get a sense of what this can mean, one has simply to look at the "educational materials" prepared by the National Education Association —once a professional association, now more a union—and observe how "fair" it is to the PLO, how coolly skeptical it is of Israel's virtues. The AFL-CIO's executive council, too, is moving to distance itself from Lane Kirkland's "old-fashioned" views on foreign policy. All in all, organized labor in the United States is reshaping itself in the mold of European trade-unionism, with an organic connection to a social-democratic party and with an ideology to suit. That ideology —as expressed, for instance, in the conferences and publications of the Socialist International— is pro-Third World, anti-Israel. It is now far more Left than it is traditionally liberal. But then, liberalism itself, in the United States as elsewhere, has moved distinctly to the Left in the past two decades.

THIS shift is very evident in a third pillar of the older liberal coalition, that class of people we call "the intellectuals"— those in academia, the media, and the foundation world. These men and women used to be predominantly liberal. Today, it is fair to describe most of them as being to the Left of the older liberalism. In the case of the media, the transition has been obvious enough, as reportage on Middle Eastern events has made clear. Here, too, we are witnessing a process that is not peculiarly American. In Britain, France, Germany, Italy, the media are even more highly critical of Israel, compassionate toward the PLO. We are witnessing the coming of age, the accession to positions of power and influence in all the institutions of the media, of the youthful rebels of the 1960's. Their attitudes may have softened somewhat, but they have not been significantly reshaped.

In the case of academia, these attitudes have actually sharpened rather than softened. The academic community today, populated by the graduate students of the 1960's, and insulated from worldly experience, is more openly and vigorously left-wing than ever before in American history. The most influential intellectual tendency among academicians today is Marxism, in a dozen or more different versions, some of them so far from the original as to perplex older Marxists, but all of them pointing in the same political direction. Just what that direction is may be inferred from the fact—and it is a fact—that an invitation to Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick to speak on campus will cause intense controversy in faculty councils, with quite a few professors going so far as to encourage student harassment should she appear. Meanwhile, such invitations go out routinely to Third World spokesmen, whose anti-Israel and anti-American remarks are listened to respectfully.

In short, while American Jews have for the most part persisted in their loyalty to the politics of American liberalism, that politics has blandly and remorselessly distanced itself from them. For the first time in living memory, Jews are finding themselves in the old condition of being politically homeless. It is possible, though far from certain, that Jews in the West will find a new home, however uncomfortable, in the conservative and neoconservative politics that, in reaction to liberalism's leftward drift, seems to be gaining momentum. But whether this conservatism will be keenly enough interested in Jews to offer tolerable lodging to them is itself an open question.

What is no longer an open question is the dissociation that has occurred, and is daily occurring, between the American Jewish community and its traditional allies. That is an established fact—and one that American Jews must candidly confront.

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Alma Redeemed

A Story

Bernard Malamud

GUSTAV MAHLER's ghost.

Bruno Walter had seen it as Mahler conducted one of his last concerts. It waxed in music as the conductor waned. The ghost appeared, more or less, to Alma Mahler one or two years after her husband was dead. Alma did not believe in ghosts, but this one troubled her. It had got into her bedsheets but hadn't stayed long.

Can Jews haunt people?

Gustav was a rationalist nonbeliever. "In that clear mind I never detected any trace of superstition," Bruno Walter said. He spoke of Mahler —as Alma clearly remembered—as a "God-struck man," whose religious self flowered in his music, viz., "*Veni, creator spiritus*," as it flashed in eternity in the Eighth Symphony. Alma felt that Mahler was too subtle a man to have believed simply in God, but that wouldn't mean he might not attempt to disturb her, although she was aware that some of her thoughts of Mahler had caused her more than ordinary fright. Might the fright have produced the ghost? Such things are possible.

In my mind, more than once I betrayed him.

Yet Mahler was a kind man although an egotist who defined his egotism as a necessity of his genius.

"*Gott*, how he loved his genius!"

Now, all of Alma's husbands, a collection of a long lifetime including Mahler, Walter Gropius, Franz Werfel—and Oskar Kokoschka, the painter, made it a fourth if you counted in the man she hadn't married, whom Alma conceived to be her most astonishing (if most difficult) lover—they were all artists of unusual merit and accomplishment; yet Alma seemed to favor Mahler even if she had trouble during her lifetime caring deeply for his music.

When she met Gustav Mahler, Alma stood 5 feet 3 inches tall and weighed 144 pounds. She loved her figure. Her deep blue eyes were her best feature. She drew men with half a glance. Alma never wore underpants and thought she knew who might know she wasn't wearing them. When she met him she felt that Mahler didn't know though he may have wanted to.

Alma, a lovely, much sought-after young woman, one of the prettiest in Vienna in those days, felt Mahler was magnetic, but she wasn't sure she ought to marry him. "He is frightening, nervous, and bounds across the room like an animal. I fear his energy."

She wrote in her diary in purple ink: "At the opera he loves to conduct *Faust*."

She wanted Gustav. She felt she had snared him in her unconscious.

Yet his demands frightened her. "Is it too late, my dearest Almchi, to ask you to make my music yours? Play as you please but don't attempt to compose. Composition is for heroes."

"How can I make his music mine if I have loved Wagner throughout my life? What passion can I possibly feel for Mahler's music or even for Mahler?" These thoughts concerned her.

"You must understand, my tender girl, that my harmony and polyphony, for all their vivid modernity, which seems to distress you, remain in the realm of pure tonality. Some day your dear ears will open to the glories of my sound."

"Yes, Gustav," said Alma.

"Let us be lovers in a true marriage. I am the composer and you are, in truth, my beloved bride."

Mahler urged her to consult her stepfather and mother. "You must lay to rest your doubts, whatever they are. The matter must be settled before we can contemplate a union for life."

"Say nothing," Carl Moll, her stepfather, advised Alma. "Best get rid of the Jew."

"*Perhaps* get rid of him," said her mother. "I never trusted his conversion to Catholicism though he pleads sincerity. He became Catholic because Cosima Wagner insisted that no Jew be allowed to replace Richard Wagner at the Vienna Opera."

But Alma said she had thought about it and decided she loved Mahler.

She did not say she was already pregnant by him.

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Mahler walked in his floppy galoshes to the church on their wedding day.

At breakfast the guests were spirited, although in memoirs she wrote many years later, Alma wasn't sure of that. She had trouble defining her mood.

She was twenty-two, Mahler was forty-one.

"If only I could find my own inner balance."

Mahler whispered into her good ear that he loved her more than he had loved anyone except his dear mother, who had died insane.

Alma said she was glad he respected his mother.

"You must give yourself to me unconditionally and desire nothing except my love."

He sounded more like a teacher than a lover.

"Yes, Gustav."

"He is continually talking about preserving his art but that is not allowed to me."

"Nothing has come to fruition for me," Alma thought. "Neither my beauty, nor my spirit, nor my talent."

"Does his genius, by definition, submerge my talent? My ship is in the harbor but has sprung a leak."

He did not lie in bed and make love to her. He preferred to mount her when she was deeply asleep.

His odor was repulsive. "Probably from your cigars," she had informed Mahler. He was a stranger to her, she wrote in her diary, "and much about him will remain strange forever."

She tripped over a paraffin lamp and set the carpet afire.

Mahler dreamed Alma was wearing her hair as she used to in her girlhood. He did not like her to pile her tresses on the top of her head. Gustav said her hairdo was Semitic-looking and he wished to avoid that impression. He assured his friends he was not a practicing Jew. Alma wore her hair long most of the time.

When their daugher Maria caught diphtheria and died, Mahler could not stand being alone. Memories of his daughter seared his life. He went from person to person with a new message: "Alma has sacrificed her youth for me. With absolute selflessness she has subordinated her life to my work."

Alma let Ossip Gabrilowitsch hold her hand in a dark room.

"To gain a spiritual center, my Alma, that's the important thing. Then everything takes on another aspect."

Alma found his impersonal preaching repellent and frightening.

Since her youth she had been nervous among strangers and very sensitive about her impaired hearing.

Mahler became frightened at the thought of losing his wife.

Mahler and Freud met in Leiden and walked for four hours along the tree-lined canals. Freud told him a good deal about the life of the psyche and Mahler was astonished though he had guessed much that Freud had told him.

"My darling, my lyre," he wrote his wife, "come exorcise the ghosts of darkness. They claw me, they throw me to the ground. I ask in silence whether I am damned. Rescue me, my dearest."

Mahler suspected that he loved Alma more than she loved him.

He was as strict now about her going back to her music as he had been nine years ago in insisting she give up composing.

One night she woke up and saw him standing by her bed like a ghost.

He dedicated his Eighth Symphony to her.

He feared his Ninth.

"Ah, how lovely it is to love, my dearest Almscherl. And it is only now that I know what love is. Believe me, Tristan sings the truth."

"Alma blossoms, on a splendid diet, and she has given up tippling Benedictine. She looks younger day by day."

One day she had a cold; Mahler invited the doctor who had examined Alma to look him over too.

"Well, you have no cause to be proud of that heart," the doctor said after listening for a minute.

The bacterial tests sealed his doom. Mahler insisted he be told the truth, and he said he wanted to die in Vienna.

He talked to Alma about his grave and tombstone. She listened gravely. He did not want to be cremated. He wanted to be there if people came to the graveyard to see him.

"Mozart," said Mahler, before he died during a thunderstorm.

"Boom!"

ALMA had met the man who later became her second husband, Walter Gropius, the architect, in a sanitarium, in Tobelbad, when, exhausted by Gustav's pace and striving, she was advised by a country doctor to take the cure.

Gustav displayed an unyielding energy she couldn't keep up with. She was the young one but he made her feel old. "That's the trick," she thought. "He wants me to match him in age."

At Tobelbad she met a handsome architect, age twenty-seven, who lived down the hall and stared at her in astonishment as she walked by. He gazed at Alma with architectural eyes and she was aware she had form.

They began to go for long walks. Gustav usually gave her short lectures in philosophy as they walked together, but this one talked on about nature and architectural masses; he seemed surprised that she did not throw herself into his arms.

Gustav, promoting his conducting career, hurried from city to city, writing to her from where he happened to be, one opera house or philharmonic society after another; but she was in no

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mood to respond. In his letters to his tender Almscherl he wrote, "I could not bear this depleting routine if it did not end with delicious thoughts of you. Regain your health, my precious dear girl, so that we may again renew our affectionate embraces."

In his letters Mahler tickled her chin and ladled out bits of gossip laced with pious observations. His pace was again frantic; yet wherever he went, he worried about her, though for reasons of scheduling, etc., found it difficult to pay her a visit to Tobelbad, yet surely she knew the direction of his heart?

He had asked his mother-in-law, Anna Moll, to write Alma a letter requesting news; and soon thereafter she paid her daughter a visit but there was no news to speak of. "She is responding to her cure, not much more." Gropius was invisible.

Alma had put him out of her mind and returned home. No one knew whether they had become or had been lovers.

"When shall we meet again?" the handsome Gropius had asked.

She wasn't sure.

"Seriously, my dearest—"

"Please do not call me 'my dearest,' I am simply Alma."

"Seriously, simple Alma."

"I am a married person, Herr Gropius. Mahler is my legal husband."

"A terrible answer," Gropius replied.

" 'None but the brave deserve the fair.' " He quoted Dryden in English.

When he translated the line, Alma said nothing.

"Mahler met me at the Tolbach station and was suddenly more in love with me than ever before."

One night when Mahler and Alma were in Vienna, before returning to their farmhouse in Tolbach, Mahler, looking around nervously, whispered, "Alma, I have the feeling that we are being followed."

"Nonsense," said Alma. "Don't be so superstitious." He laughed but it did not sound like a laugh. He did not practice sufficiently, Alma thought.

Gropius then sent Mahler a letter asking his permission to marry his wife. Alma placed her husband's mail on the piano and shivered at lunch as Mahler slowly read the letter, whose writing she had recognized. She had wanted to tear it up but was afraid to.

Mahler read the letter and let out a gasp, then a deep cry.

"Who is this crazy man who asks permission to marry my wife? Am I, then, your father?"

Alma laughed a little hysterically yet managed to answer calmly.

"This is a foolish young man I met at the sanitarium. I do not love him."

"Who said love?" Mahler shouted.

Alma eventually calmed him, but he felt as though he had been shipwrecked and didn't know why.

That afternoon Alma saw Gropius from her car window as she drove past the village bridge. Gropius didn't see her.

She returned from her errand feeling ill and breathlessly told Mahler whom she had seen walking near the bridge, "That was the young man who was interested in me in Tobelbad although I did nothing to encourage him."

"We shall see." Mahler took along a kerosene lamp and went out searching for Gropius. He found him not far from their farmhouse. "I am Mahler," the composer said. "Perhaps you wish to speak to my wife?"

Gropius, scratching under his arm, confessed that intent. "I am Gropius."

Mahler lit the lamp. It was dark.

He called up the stairs and Alma came down.

"I come," she said.

"You two ought to talk," said Mahler. He withdrew to his study where he read to himself in the Old Testament.

When Alma, white-faced, came to him in the study, Mahler told her calmly that she was free to decide in whatever way she wanted. "You can do as you feel you must." If he was conducting, no stick was visible.

"Thanks," said Alma. "I want him to go. Please let him stay until morning and then he shall go. I have spoken to him and explained that I will not tolerate bad manners."

Mahler went back to reading the Old Testament. He was thinking of "*Das Lied von der Erde*" though he had not yet written it.

Gropius stayed overnight and Alma drove him to his train to Berlin in the morning.

Gropius, holding his hat, said he was sorry for the trouble he had caused. Then he said, "When shall we meet again?"

"Never," said Alma. "I am a happy woman. Please stay away from my life."

"Never is *never*."

Gropius said none but the brave deserve the fair.

He got into the train and sent her a worshipful telegram from every station it stopped at.

Gustav, that night, collapsed outside Alma's bedroom. The candle he was holding fell to the floor and the house almost went up in flames.

Alma got him to bed; she put Gropius out of her mind, where he remained until years later, long after Mahler's death, when she felt she could no longer stand Oskar Kokoschka's wild fantasies and burning desires.

MAHLER, leaning out of his window at the Hotel Majestic above Central Park, in New York City, heard "boom" in the street below. The boom was for a dead fireman in a horse-drawn funeral cortège.

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Mahler wrote the muffled drumbeat into his Tenth Symphony: BOOM!

"I know I am lost if I go any further with the present confusion in my life"—Kokoschka.

"May I see you?" he asked.

Alma loved men of genius.

He was worldly, sensuous. He needed love and money.

He came to visit and they went to bed. She woke him and said it was time to go home. When he left her he walked till dawn.

He signed her into his name: Alma Oskar Kokoschka.

"Read this letter in the evening."

He bought the Paris newspapers to check on the weather when she was there.

"Alma, I passed your house at one o'clock and could have cried out in anger because you see the others and leave me in the dirty street."

The women in his paintings resemble Alma.

Remembering Gustav and fearing that she was pregnant by Oskar, Alma worried about any Jew who might see her pregnant.

In view of the Jungfrau he painted her on a balcony.

Oskar's mother railed against his obsession. "She is like a high-society mistress, a whore without garters."

"Shut your black mouth," he told her.

Alma feared pregnancy. It was wrong to have had a child out of wedlock. Maria had died because Alma had become pregnant before her marriage to Mahler.

Oskar's mother threatened to shoot her.

Kokoschka went to Alma's house and found his mother walking around with a gun in her purse.

"Give it here."

She crooked her finger and said, "Boom."

"Those who sin will be punished," Alma said one night to Mahler's ghost.

Oskar: "I am not allowed to see you every day because you want to keep alive the memory of this Jew who is so foreign to me."

"I must have you for my wife or else my talent will perish miserably."

She said she would marry him only after he had created a masterwork.

"Alma, please don't send me any money. I don't want it."

"*Die Windsbraut*" is Oskar's painting of Alma and him. She sleeps with her head on his shoulder. He gazes into the distance.

"I dreamed that Gustav was conducting. I was sitting near him and heard the music but it clearly displeased me."

"How far behind me my life with Mahler seems."

"I need my crazy mystique of the artist and from this I always manage to fill my head. The whole world is ultimately a dream that turns bad."

In Kokoschka's painting at Semmering, Alma ascends to Heaven in fiery immolation. Oskar is in hell, surrounded by sexy fat serpents.

Alma was pregnant. "She will marry me now": Kokoschka.

Gustav's death mask arrived in the mail. Alma unpacked it and hung it on the wall. She entered the clinic for an abortion.

Austria declared war on Serbia. Alma wrote in her diary: "I imagine I have caused the whole upheaval. . . ."

"I would like to break free from Oskar."

"God punished me by sending this man into my life."

"I would give up every man on earth for music."

"Wagner means more to me than anyone. His time will come again."

Mrs. Kokoschka picked up her clay pot and dropped it on the floor. She withdrew a blood-red string of beads she was holding for Kokoschka. Alma had given them to him as a memento of his love for her.

"Yesterday evening I ran away from Oskar."

"What of the Jewish question *now*? They need help and direction—brains and feeling from those of us who are Christians."

She wrote to Gropius.

"I will get him quickly. I feel this is, or will become, something important to me."

Walter's birthday fell on the day Mahler had died.

Alma went to see him. "Finally in the course of an hour he fell in love with me. We were where the wine and good food raised our spirits. I went to the train with him where love overpowered him so that he dragged me onto the moving train, and come what might I had no choice but to travel to Hannover with him."

Walter had the manners of a husband. He was talented, handsome, an Aryan. He was crazily jealous of Kokoschka. Alma married him.

"So married, so free, and yet so bound."

"I wanted to make my own music, or music about which I felt deeply, because Gustav's was foreign to me."

"Jews have given us spirit but have eaten our hearts."

"My husband means nothing to me any more. Walter has come too late."

She had met Franz Werfel. "Werfel is a rather fat Jew with full lips and watery almond eyes. He says: 'How can I be happy when there is someone who is suffering?' which I have heard verbatim from another egocentric, Gustav Mahler."

ALMA married Werfel. He was a Jew who looked like a Jew, yet passable. She had had half a Jew in Mahler, and Werfel made the other half. They had a lot to learn, these Jews. They needed a Christian quality. Gropius was a true Aryan, a fine gentleman, pas-

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sionate in his way, though she had never loved him. She had given him up for Werfel. She often thought of Kokoschka but hated him. "He wants to annihilate me."

Werfel needed her. He lived in dirty rooms, his clothes uncared for, cigarette butts on the floor. He needed a wife. He already had fathered a son whom Gropius thought was his child. Walter had guessed that out and departed. He had tried to keep their daughter Manon but Alma had fought him for her. Gropius retreated like a gentleman. Manon died and was buried next to her half-sister, Maria Mahler.

Alma lived with Franz Werfel through her best days. He wrote *Verdi, The Song of Bernadette,* and *The Star of the Unborn.* He made money and they spent it freely. The only really bad time was when they were trying to find their way out of Europe as the Nazis sought them in Spain. Then an American diplomat assisted them and they got out of Portugal on a Portuguese ship, and afterward lived in Beverly Hills, U.S.A. Alma was feeling happy again.

But there is no beating out illness and bad health. Werfel died in his sixties. Alma did not attend his funeral though the guests had assembled and were awaiting her. Bruno Walter thrice played a Schubert Impromptu as they waited for Alma to appear, but she had had it with funerals of three husbands. She was drinking Benedictine and never got to Werfel's funeral. She often felt that Kokoschka had been her best lover.

"MAHLER had a long white face. He sat with his coat buttoned up to his ears. He looked like death masquerading as a monk. I told him this, hoping to exorcise my ghostly pangs of dread."

"Why do I fancy I am free when my character contracts me like a prison?": Mahler.

"Where is *my* truth?": Alma.

"He was always stopping on a walk to feel his pulse. I had always known his heart was diseased."

"The Jews are at once an unprecedented danger and the greatest good luck to humanity."

"I see Hitler as a genuine German idealist, something that is unthinkable to Jews."

"But fortunately he was stupid."

"Oh, my God, my God, why do you *so* love evil?"

"Werfel believed in the world revolution through Bolshevism. I believed that fascism would solve the problems of the world."

Alma wore long necklaces with earrings and used dark lipstick. She drank Benedictine and ate little.

"Death is a contagious disease. That is the reason," Alma wrote in her diary, "why I will not place a photograph of a living person next to someone who is dead."

She thought she had met Crown Prince Rudolf of Austria on a mountaintop and he asked Alma to bear his child.

One night Mahler's ghost appeared, momentarily freezing her fingers.

"Alma, aren't you yet moved by my classically beautiful music? One can hear eternity in it."

"How can one love Mahler if she best loves Wagner?"

"My time will come."

Mahler diminished as he faded.

Alma felt he had handled her badly in her youth.

Yet there were moments she thought she still loved Mahler. She pictured him in a cemetery surrounded by his grave.

Alma favored cremation.

She was eighty-five when she died in 1964, older than King Lear.

ALMA redeemed.

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The Networks vs. the Recovery

Paul H. Weaver

IN THE summer of 1981, some six months after Ronald Reagan took office, the U.S. economy stopped growing and began to contract. Over the ensuing year-and-a-half the country experienced a recession of about average intensity and duration for the postwar period. Real gross national product contracted by 2.5 percent. The unemployment rate rose from 7.2 percent to 10.8 percent. In December 1982, when contraction gave way to recovery, 12 million Americans were out of work.

The recession, naturally, was covered intensively by the press, including the television networks' nightly news programs. Night after night, month after month, they reported the latest economic statistics, which generally painted a picture of growing millions out of work, sagging morale, and a still substantial (though declining) inflation rate. Having rehearsed the essential statistics, the anchormen would then switch to filmed reports from correspondents in the field showing the scenes and replaying the sounds of plants being closed and people losing jobs or looking for work. In this period, the economic news was unrelievedly discouraging. But so were the economic conditions it reflected.

In December 1982, the economy started growing again, and during the twelve months that followed, the country experienced an economic recovery and expansion whose size once again made it about average for postwar expansions. Real gross national product rose by 6.2 percent, total employment grew by 3.9 million, unemployment fell to 8.2 percent, and one measure of inflation, the producer-price index, rose by 0.6 percent—the smallest increase since 1964. Automobile sales grew smartly, rising 18 percent above the previous year's depressed level. Real per-capita after-tax income went up by 5.3 percent, and the Dow Jones Industrial Average hit record highs.

But as the economy itself began growing again, the networks' economic coverage became curiously schizophrenic, according to a study conducted by the Institute of Applied Economics, a small New York research group that videotaped and analyzed every economic news story on the three network nightly news programs from July 1 through December 31, 1983. The Institute's analysts identified two main types of economic news stories. One genre—there were from four to fifteen of these per month in the period under study—was the news item, often short, that in the typical case reported freshly released economic statistics. Of these, nearly all (about 95 percent) conveyed a positive impression: things in the economy were getting better, the data reflected the improving trend, and the stories reflected the data.

A second genre of news story identified in the study was the longer, in-depth, interpretative news analysis, typically narrated by a reporter in the field. These stories took as their point of departure some event of the day; often the "news peg" was the announcement of upward movement in an economic indicator. But having quickly noted the news peg, the stories would then turn to their real purpose—delving beneath the surface of the news to identify some larger, more meaningful economic reality or trend. According to the study, the networks ran 104 of these longer, more analytic, less event-oriented news pieces during the second half of 1983. Of these stories, 89, or about 85 percent, featured bad news, emphasizing not any reassuring resurgence of economic growth or welcome increase in employment, but the recession's lingering ill effects, or the persistence of structural economic problems that demanded attention now that the recession had passed.

Their length and documentary character made this second group of stories the dominant body of network economic-news coverage—and the impression they conveyed was strongly negative. The economy, they suggested, though perhaps technically in recovery, was not really much better. Major problems of hunger, chronic unemployment, and regional and structural stagnation remained. The pains and scars of a long recession were far from forgotten. Presiding over the entire worrisome situation, these stories suggested, was an uncaring, politically manipulative administration that sought political advantage in the nation's recovery from a recession which the ad-

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ministration's policies had probably made worse.

Overall, then, as the study concludes: "The economic news was good in the second half of 1983. The coverage on network television was still in recession."

A TYPICAL example of this pattern was broadcast on December 2, 1983, when the Bureau of Labor Statistics announced preliminary unemployment statistics for November. On ABC, senior economics correspondent Dan Cordtz summarized the news with his customary —and, alas, among the men and women of television news, unique—precision and generosity:

> Unemployment fell significantly last month for almost every category of worker. . . . And employment went up in most of the 186 different industries on which the government collects statistics. In just two months, the total number of unemployed Americans has dropped by well over a million. That's a remarkable decline, and a sign of how surprisingly strong the economic recovery is. At the rate things are going, unemployment may not even be a political issue by the time election day rolls around next year.

Picking up on Cordtz's theme, anchorman Peter Jennings observed, "The White House called the drop in unemployment 'remarkable,' and President Reagan was obviously pleased." Film showed a beaming Ronald Reagan exulting before a White House press conference earlier that day, "We're a little ahead of schedule on the recovery." Jennings, broadcasting from Chicago, concluded the segment by noting, "Here in the Midwest, a lot of people have still been left behind, and a little later we'll have a report on them."

Soon Jennings was back: "And now those unemployment figures again. . . . Here in Illinois, once again, there are many families for whom the statistics, as good as they are, have little meaning. This week we met a couple of them." One was Jack Lauderbach, forty-eight, whom we watched jogging along the streets of his "fairly well-to-do Chicago suburb" on a cold winter day. "He'd worked hard all his life, he'd become a successful executive—the American dream, if you will, become reality. . . . Twenty months ago, the dream began to dissolve" when he was fired as a $39,000-a-year personnel director of the Brunswick Corporation during a reorganization. We also met Frank Foster, thirty-three, who was raking leaves in the front yard of his rented house in an attractive neighborhood in Rockford, Illinois. Over a decade he had worked his way up in the local Borg-Warner automobile-parts factory to an $11-an-hour job as a stock clerk. "A year and a half ago, he lost his job. His dream dissolved as well." Both men, Jennings informed us, were "among the nation's chronically unemployed. That's a word usually applied to illness. It means prolonged, and lingering. Frank and Jack *never* expected to be out of work."

Foster, a cheerful, modest, well-spoken father of two who left school early to work his way up in the company, had lost his house; the bank foreclosed when he and his wife, also unemployed, were unable to meet the mortgage payments. "Losing their own home, more than anything else, was an attack on the status they'd worked for," said Jennings. "Their faith in the American dream has been badly shaken." Mrs. Foster, now also out of work, explained: "The way America was, you could start at the bottom and go up. . . . Now there's not too much to do to start at the bottom." Jennings added that "now could be a particularly bad time for the Fosters." A Johns Hopkins University psychologist was then brought on to say of chronically unemployed people like the Fosters, "It is exactly when things seem to be getting better for other people that they find themselves isolated."

Lauderbach, we then discovered, had sent out 2,500 resumes (we saw him typing on his sleek Olivetti electric); "so far, no success." With his severance pay and unemployment insurance exhausted, his wife had taken two jobs, and his mother, who lives with him, was contributing her Social Security check. "In this family, it isn't that there's no food, it's the price Jack pays in dignity," Jennings said. He showed film of Jack explaining that "if you give up, you're dead," and admitting that though "it's dumb, and I'll never do it," he has thought of suicide ("taking the pipe," he called it).

Jennings noted pointedly that the recent drop in unemployment "hasn't solved Jack Lauderbach's or Frank Foster's problem." He said that Louis Ferman, a labor-market expert at the University of Michigan, "expects new faces in the ranks of the chronically unemployed." Ferman: "It's no longer that mechanization is only being thrust into the blue-collar world. It's being thrust all over, top to bottom. Every job is in a sense vulnerable." Having delivered that gloomy assessment, Jennings gave his two chronically unemployed subjects some parting words. The former stock clerk was optimistic: "Just hope for the best," he said with his shy smile. The former personnel director was hopeful, too, but there was desperation in his words: "Sooner or later, I'm gonna get something. I mean, I gotta feel that way. If I don't, you know, I'm gonna take the pipe."

The Institute for Applied Economics sums up: "A story that began with an 0.4 percent drop in unemployment ended in complete despair and talk of suicide."

JENNINGS's theme was bitter irony—the illusoriness of the economy's seeming improvement, the persistence of deep and disturbing problems—and it was repeated again

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and again during this period. The networks ran dozens of long, interpretative stories about hunger, the burden of which was, as CBS's Lem Tucker put it in December at the end of a long report that closed with videotape of a homeless man sleeping on a subway grate in Washington, D.C.: "The nation is now in its fourteenth month of economic recovery. Unemployment is the lowest it's been in two years. *They* [the hungry] are *still* there." And it was not just the hungry whose numbers were undiminished amid declining unemployment. In November, an NBC story on unemployment stated, "One of the painful side-effects of high unemployment in many areas was a significant increase in cases of wife beating. However, the problem of battered women doesn't go away when the economy improves. . . . It is always there."

Other stories suggested that as the employment situation got better, it only got worse. On July 8, when the Labor Department announced a drop in unemployment, CBS reporter Ray Brady emphasized that there were 1,250,000 new people in the labor market seeking only 350,000 available jobs, and focused on worsening unemployment in certain industrial states. In November, after unemployment fell from 9.2 percent to 8.8 percent in a month, ABC stated that the drop in unemployment was the result of many jobless Americans ending their search for work. Thus, the "news is not as good as it sounds. . . ." Throughout the period, the networks reported numerous cases of reopened plants attracting far more applicants than there were new jobs. The impression created was that such events disappointed more people than they helped. As Peter Jennings put it in August: "There was another of those huge job lines today. . . . In Galesburg, Illinois, 40 jobs opened up at the Admiral Appliance factory; 10,500 people lined up to fill out applications."

The ultimate irony of all was the one broached by ABC's Dan Cordtz in August at the close of a long and generally excellent exploration of recession and recovery in two very different states—West Virginia, with the nation's highest unemployment rate (19.5 percent), and Massachusetts, with one of the nation's lowest (6 percent). After explaining that the two states were so different because they had such different industries, Cordtz ended by saying: "In a number of states like Massachusetts, the outlook is pretty bright, and that's clearly good news. But it also means that the gap between the beneficiaries of the recovery and the victims of a lingering recession will grow even wider in the months ahead." In other words, just as the recession had widened the gap between rich and poor, now the recovery was about to do its part to make the rich richer and the poor poorer.

The effort to see irony and contradiction in the events of the recovery led television news in some instances to make errors of fact. In December, Ford Motor Company, in the wake of an unsuccessful effort to sell its aging Rouge steel subsidiary to the Japanese, announced it would spend $168 million to modernize the facility, the nation's eighth largest. On CBS, anchorman Dan Rather briefly sketched the Ford announcement, then dismissed it: "That kind of business investment so far hasn't played a major role in the drama of recovery." In the lengthy interpretative story that followed, reporter Ray Brady added: "It is the shadow which darkens the eleven-month-old economic recovery. While many companies once again are making huge profits, so far they've been reluctant to invest those profits in new plants and new machinery." In fact, according to Commerce Department data, "nonresidential fixed" investment of precisely the type Ford was undertaking at the Rouge plant was running about 50 percent ahead of the norm for recoveries in the postwar era. In its enthusiasm to deny the reality of the economic expansion, network news not only misrepresented an important trend, but virtually passed over an event of significance in its own right.

THE fascination of the networks with the recovery's weaknesses and the economy's underlying problems was closely associated with their even more intense interest in the person and policies of Ronald Reagan. To play through the Institute's videotapes of network economic news stories is to enter a world that revolves around the White House. In this Reaganocentric view of the universe, everything is explained by a few simple equations. In one equation, Reaganomics equals the interests of the rich equals indifference to the poor. In another, the claims of the poor are associated with the press, which is arrayed against Ronald Reagan and his policies.

This way of looking at life is not limited to this particular body of news coverage. In a study of, among other things, network coverage of the first 100 days of 1983, political scientist Michael Robinson and his colleagues identified the same set of identities and oppositions. Of 46 "soft-news" stories about policy issues mentioning Ronald Reagan, 27 were directly negative toward Reagan and just two were positive. As the authors pointed out, the stories were notably critical of Reagan's economic policies:

> In a feature report on Reagan's first two years, Sam Donaldson and ABC superimposed the President's picture over a brightly colored visual that traced the phenomenal growth in unemployment during Reagan's first term. In those same frames, ABC also used audiotape in which Reagan predicted that the recession was over. The report made it perfectly clear that Reaganomics had failed. . . . "There is," concluded Donaldson, "plenty of room for disagreement over whether Ronald Reagan should re-

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ceive a passing or failing grade for these past two years. But there is a consensus in Washington that unless he changes his game plan, economically the grade for the next two years will almost certainly be an F."*

For the networks, therefore, covering economic news consisted in large part of trying to demonstrate that under the influence of Ronald Reagan's policies, the economy was unfair and/or was performing badly. Alternatively, on occasion it consisted of an effort to show that while the economy was doing all right, Ronald Reagan and his associates were not.

THE anti-Reagan animus was vividly demonstrated by two episodes in the second half of 1983. The first occurred on July 20, when CBS ran the only substantial news account I saw on videotape that was unqualifiedly positive about the recovery. The story was introduced by Dan Rather, sitting in front of a graphic display showing a map of the U.S., bedecked with stars-and-stripes bunting, on which were superimposed the words, "Gross National Product":

> "Stunning—the figure leaves us a little breathless." That was one analyst's reaction to today's Commerce Department reports that the gross national product grew at a surprising 8.7 percent annual rate in the year's second quarter. That's the fastest pace for economic growth in more than two years.

Then Rather handed the narrative over to reporter Bruce Hall, who proceeded to give a report on the strength of the economy in Atlanta, where resurgent consumer spending was helping the city lead the nation out of the recession.

The entire lengthy story consisted of an exploration of the sources and consequences of Atlanta's economic buoyancy. A viewer learned that sales at a major shopping mall were up 13 percent, that salesmen could see the increased consumer optimism that was leading people in the area to spend a higher proportion of their disposable income. We were told that consumer spending in the second quarter of the year rose at an annual rate of 10 percent, and that clothing and automobiles were selling particularly well. Hall took his audience on a visit to a dress shop, then showed a couple buying a new Cadillac (for cash). The story was unusual, and interesting, in its willingness to give specifics about the recovery in one city. It was also unusual in not hastening to seek out a dark irony, hidden contradiction, or worrisome underside of Atlanta's economic comeback. It concluded simply, "With the customers returning, much of Atlanta is beginning to enjoy life just a little bit more."

Dan Rather immediately reappeared on the screen to introduce the next story:

> President Reagan hailed the Commerce Department report today. He said, quote, "Vigorous growth is the surest route to more jobs, declining deficits, and a future filled with opportunity." It's hard to quarrel with those words. The problem, Ray Brady explains, lay with some of the President's statistics.

Only in America would the story that followed be broadcast on national television. For over the next few minutes Brady, using videotape of a Ronald Reagan press conference earlier that day, showed the President making four significant factual errors in a series of extemporaneous, upbeat statements about the economy. And using official government statistics, Brady coolly refuted each error, one by one. The effect was electrifying: it isn't often that one witnesses a direct, one-on-one confrontation between a journalist and the President of the United States. In the "kicker" that concluded his story, Brady did not try to calm the charged atmosphere, but pressed the attack:

> The White House press office said this afternoon the figures could have different interpretations. And an administration source told CBS News the President was obviously doing some fast figuring in his head.

It does not seem accidental that the one lengthy TV story in the period under study that did not deny or qualify the recovery appeared back-to-back with this extraordinary personal challenge to and rebuke of President Reagan by a network newsman. Together, the stories sustained the underlying equations that shaped the content of TV economic news. It seems equally uncoincidental that on the one occasion during the period in question in which a senior member of the Reagan administration stepped out of the indifferent-to-the-poor persona to which the press had become accustomed among the President's men, the networks went to extraordinary lengths to ridicule the effort and deny its reality.

The event in question occurred in August 1983, when the press and the Democrats were harping on the hunger issue and the President was about to appoint a task force to look into it. Apparently as part of the administration's response to the problem, Secretary of Agriculture John Block and his family conducted an experiment in which they lived for a week on food stamps. The effort was kicked off with a shopping visit and photo-opportunity session in a Bethesda supermarket, where the Blocks bought $54 worth of groceries (food-stamp recipients get $58 worth of stamps), and it ended a week later at a press conference in which the Blocks described their experiences. It was a symbolic gesture, but a meaningful one, since Block is responsible for administering the food-stamp program, and since it is always desirable for someone in such a position to know from experience what his "clients" go through. That it was also a good way to grab a bit of pub-

* Michael Robinson, Maura Clancy, and Lisa Grand, "With Friends Like These . . . ," *Public Opinion*, June/July 1983.

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licity for himself and his boss does not negate its intrinsic value.

CBS's Dan Rather wasted no time derogating this gesture. This was the first sentence of his introduction to the story: "Agriculture Secretary John Block is a millionaire farmer who owns a $300,000 house in the Washington suburbs." (Its hostility aside, this statement is breathtaking in its hypocrisy, considering the identity of the man making it. Does Rather mean to invite people commenting on his doings and undoings to preface their remarks with the comparable observation: "Dan Rather is a multimillionaire TV star and national celebrity who lives in a half-a-million-dollar coop on Manhattan's posh Park Avenue and who often presents himself as caring about the poor"?) Reporter Eric Engberg began his filmed report this way:

> The hustle and bustle at this supermarket was the work of Agriculture Secretary John Block's staff, whose cash crop today was publicity. The Secretary and his wife Sue made a carefully staged trip through the aisles to show that the government's recommended food-stamp allotment for the poor . . . can provide a nutritious diet.

A week later, when the Blocks reported on their adventures, the people at CBS News were still on the warpath. Rather opened:

> A week ago, Agriculture Secretary John Block and his family began a short experiment of living on a food-stamp budget. They did so among much well-orchestrated publicity. Critics insisted that it was all designed mainly to feed the Reagan administration public-relations mill.

This time reporter Engberg was much straighter in covering the Blocks' experiences, which were instructive. Clearly they had not found the experiment easy, particularly at the beginning, and the Secretary ordered free distribution of a government booklet they had used in planning their food buying, which, they found, was tricky on the tight budget. But Engberg nevertheless invoked the theme of the public-relations gesture again in his kicker, in which he showed videotape of Block, an avid runner, suited up and taking off from the starting line in a one-mile race: "Moving on to run a mile in a promotion of fitness, Block said he felt better qualified to oversee the $12-billion food-stamp program than he did a week ago."

IN ALL this the networks were acting in part out of liberal political animus. It is impossible to watch these stories without concluding that the journalists writing and performing them had a low opinion of Ronald Reagan, his conservative philosophy, and his economic policies. It is hard not to conclude that their opinion of the man and his program was so low that they were determined to do everything within their legitimate discretion, and perhaps then some, to prevent their reportage from suggesting that the policies worked, or that a recovery was in full swing, or that the President might be in line for some credit for the expansion of the economy.

In part too the networks were acting out of an institutional animus. To watch these stories is to be in the presence of the acts and utterances of people who evidently believe passionately that their mission is to criticize and oppose the President—any President—as if they were members of an opposition party in a parliament. This "adversary" role, as it has been called, is relatively new for American journalism, which historically has thought of itself as politically neutral, save in those rare or anyway limited cases where it serves as a watchdog defending basic concepts of law and personal morality. What this development signifies is the institutionalization of the ideas and attitudes that infected the media in the 1960's.

Yet the strongest impression these stories leave is not of liberalism or of institutional imperialism, but of opportunism and incoherence. In December, in the wake of the flap created by presidential counselor Edwin Meese when he questioned whether all those being fed in soup kitchens were really in need, ABC ran a long and evidently lengthily prepared story by national correspondent James Wooten intended to get to the bottom of the issue and sort out what is and is not known about hunger in America.

Early on, Wooten put the issue squarely:

> By any standard and in any season, America is a generous community. Nearly $20 billion tax dollars this year alone for federal food programs, and another $50 billion at least donated to private charities. . . . So if we're spending all that much money, why do we still have hungry neighbors?

A good question to which, as it happened, Wooten had no coherent answer. At first he said, quoting food lobbyist Nancy Amadei, that "if there are more people without money, there are more people at risk of hunger." But in a dramatic conclusion, he shifted course:

> Hunger and need and poverty persist in this country, not from a lack of money, but a lack of commitment, not as a consequence of policy, but a product of politics.

The meaning of this statement was never explained. Then once again Wooten shifted course:

> And as the debate drones on and on into the presidential campaign, the problem simply grows.

It is hard to avoid the impression, finally, that this confusion, this refusal to lay troubling questions to rest where possible—which had their counterparts in virtually every story in the period under study—reflect the very essence of television

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journalism in its current form. This is an institution whose behavior seems to do only one thing consistently: create conflict and agitate issues, and present itself as the arbiter of the resulting maelstrom.

In other words, television denied the reality of the recovery in large part out of the institutionalized egomania that TV journalism has become. The filmed TV news story is an intensely personal and interpretative narrative form, dominated by the voice, language, image, thought, and feeling of the omniscient narrator, the reporter, who is completely in control of every element of the story. These excerpts from the networks' coverage of the recovery suggest that the people of TV news have finally internalized this stance of omniscience, that they have begun to take this formal fiction literally. They proceed in these stories as if they were superior to events, superior to the audience, superior to elected politicians, superior to everyone and everything. No one and nothing is good enough for them; all they can see about them is bad news. A recession is bad news; a recovery is also bad news. So insistent are these newsmen on interpreting reality and laying bare subsurface meanings and broader trends—as they choose to define reality, meanings, and trends—that they cannot report mere actual events, no matter how important. Neither can they sustain the discipline to form a coherent image of the trends and circumstances surrounding them. As a result, they misrepresent and falsify what is going on in the world.

IN MY opinion, the networks' coverage of the recent economic recovery and expansion limns one of the more unattractive and depressing episodes in the history of American journalism. At the end of a long period of growing economic disarray and decay, and in the wake of a deep and painful economic contraction —a contraction sharply criticized by TV journalists—the network news programs effectively denied the reality of the long-awaited recovery. Things were at long last getting better. A set of policies was working; even if one disagreed with their premises, they deserved to be taken seriously, rather than mindlessly derogated. These realities were blacked out on the network news.

This cannot be explained away as the perhaps unfortunate but nevertheless inevitable result of the supposed iron laws of television journalism that apologists conventionally adduce to exculpate network news and explain away poor performance. We are often told, for example, that with their meager 22 minutes a night in which to present the news of the world, the networks must omit or radically condense much that is important. But that was not the problem in this case, since the networks could have achieved a reasonably truthful sketch of events simply by reversing the emphasis of their coverage—spending most of the time on the recovery, and noting in introductory or parenthetical passages or in an occasional feature story the persistence of pockets of unemployment, or permanent poverty and hunger, or structural maladjustment in West Virginia and other such areas. Similarly, the old saw about television being a visual medium and needing colorful action film does not explain why people going back to work and factories reopening are not news, while people without work and shut-down factories are news. No, what the Institute of Applied Economics study reflects is misrepresentation by journalists corrupted by hubris.

In recent decades the most widespread and insistent theme of press criticism has been the denigration of the "objective" tradition in modern journalism as mindless and irrelevant and misleading. What really matters, the critics have declared, is the meaning of news events and the broader trends of our time; accordingly, the main mission of journalism should be to divine trends and meanings, not to assemble data describing the noise and random flux of the day's events.

This view, alas, is mostly wrong-headed; in fact, the truth is just the reverse. What is enduringly valuable in journalism—not to mention hard to get—is accurate information about what actually happened today or yesterday; assembling and presenting such information is the highest ambition journalism can realistically pursue. Trends and meanings are fictions that merely aggrandize the journalist and manipulate the audience, not inform it; they, not the data of actual experience, are the true noise of history. The cure for what has come to ail network news is therefore straightforward: it is to abandon the false sophistication of the thematic, interpretative television news story, and to return to the oldest tradition of American journalism—the description of daily events and the pursuit of hard fact.

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Underdevelopment Revisited

Peter L. Berger

THE poverty in which large numbers of human beings live has been a stubborn and morally troubling reality for a long time. The terminology describing this reality has often changed, however. During the hopeful years of decolonization in the aftermath of World War II, "backwardness" (a term suggesting mental retardation) gave way to "underdevelopment" (implying a merely physical lag). This "underdevelopment" was to be cured by "development," in turn identified with "growth" (as a child catches up with an adult). The manifesto of this period was Walt W. Rostow's *The Stages of Economic Growth*, first published in 1960, and reminiscent of Jean Piaget's child psychology in its self-confident prescription of how a country develops from "take-off" to "maturity."

Then came the late 1960's and early 1970's, when this entire way of looking at the poorer portions of the globe was radically debunked, both in the "underdeveloped" countries themselves and in influential academic sectors of the West. Not only did the "children" throw the book at their "teachers," but many teachers recanted their earlier pedagogic doctrine. The quasi-mythological phrase "Third World" came into vogue, while the bureaucratic agencies concerned with the poorer regions fell back either on the relatively optimistic term "developing countries" or on the seemingly neutral term, "less developed countries" (with its official acronym, LDC's).

In the last few years, as the revolutionary redemptions of the "Third World" have proved ever more disappointing, the favored term has become "South," as in "North/South dialogue." "South" suggests sunshine, perhaps even natural abundance, but also languid siestas in the heat of the day. The ambiguity is telling.

Changes in terminology sometimes reflect advances in knowledge; sometimes they are covers for ignorance. Which is the case here? How much have we really learned about the world's poverty and the remedies for it?

If one is in the habit of writing books, these books can sometimes serve as convenient landmarks to measure both advances in learning and perduring ignorance. It is now almost exactly ten years since the publication of my *Pyramids of Sacrifice*, which was a tentative summing-up of what I had learned about "development" since becoming involved in the topic a few years earlier. As it happens this book (somewhat to my surprise) is still being read; more importantly, it reflects a particular phase in the intellectual and political debate over the issue of poverty and development. For this reason a look at what I said in 1974 may be a useful exercise.

I wrote *Pyramids of Sacrifice* in response to two powerful experiences. One was my first contact with Third World poverty, which shocked me morally as well as emotionally. The other was the eruption in American academia of a neo-Marxist rhetoric, which purported to understand the causes of Third World poverty and which also claimed to know the remedies. I was never convinced by this rhetoric, but I wanted to be fair to it. More than anything else, I wanted to explore, with moral engagement and skeptical rationality, an area which at that time was suffused with violent emotions and blatantly irrational opinions.

The book argued that both capitalism and socialism had generated myths that had to be debunked—the capitalist myth of growth, which mistook an increase in GNP for improvement in the condition of the poor, and the socialist myth of revolution, which provided an alibi for tyranny. In the service of demythologizing these ideas, the book advocated an open, non-doctrinaire approach; neither capitalism nor socialism, it argued, offered a panacea. Each country would have to think through, in pragmatic terms, what its most promising development strategy should be. As far as moral criteria were concerned, such a pragmatic assessment should be guided, I thought, by two calculi—a "calculus of pain," by which I meant the avoidance of human suffering, and a "calculus of meaning," which I defined as respect for the values of the putative beneficiaries of development policies.

A centerpiece of the book was a comparison of Brazil and China, important respectively as the largest capitalist and the largest socialist case. I had traveled extensively in Brazil just before writing *Pyramids*; although I had not been to

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China, I had read voraciously about it. I concluded that both "models" should be rejected—curiously, for the same reason. Both were willing to sacrifice a generation for an allegedly certain goal of development, Brazil through the adoption of economic policies that condoned widespread and bitter misery as the short-run price for long-run prosperity, China through terror and totalitarianism. Neither the Brazilian technocrats nor the Chinese ideologists, I wrote, could be certain about the eventual outcome of their policies. This being so, they lost any moral warrant for the sacrifices they were imposing on their peoples.

Yet neither case, the book suggested, exhausted the possibilities of the capitalist or socialist development models. Capitalism need not be practiced as brutally as in Brazil, and there could be a more humane socialism than that of Maoist China. In this connection, I said some nice things about Peru (then under Velasco's Left-leaning regime) and Tanzania; I had been briefly in both places and had been favorably impressed.

A number of readers of *Pyramids of Sacrifice* were misled by my wish to be fair to the Left (which, practically, meant that I desired to go on talking with most of my colleagues). They read the book as advocating democratic socialism. That had not been my intention at all. What did come through, however, was some vague notion of a "third way," perhaps some sort of a so-called mixed model. I had no clear conception of what this might look like; I was unsure of much, and I admitted it. I did feel sure of two things, however: that people should not be allowed to starve if the means to feed them were at hand, and that people should not be subjected to totalitarian terror under any circumstances.

OBVIOUSLY, *Pyramids of Sacrifice* is today obsolete, because of the changes that have taken place in the world (more of this below). But looking back on it now, I am struck as well by the changes that have occurred in my own perspective. Not to put too fine a point on it, I am much less evenhanded today in my assessment of capitalist and socialist development models: I have become much more emphatically pro-capitalist. Some part of the shift I have undergone is undoubtedly due to personal experience. In 1974, except for one foray into Africa, my acquaintance with the Third World was limited to Latin America; inevitably, this made for a very specific bias. In 1977, however, I had my first experience of East Asia and since then my attention has turned very strongly to that region. East Asia is inconvenient territory for those who want to be evenhanded as between capitalist and socialist development models. Specifically, the capitalist "success stories" of East Asia and the lessons they hold must be confronted by any reflective person with a concern for world poverty.

To speak of success stories implies a definition of success. And here I would today insist that, minimally, there are three criteria to be applied.

First, successful development presupposes sustained and self-generating economic growth. To that extent, at least, Rostow and the other enthusiasts of the 1950's were perfectly right, while the late fantasists of zero growth were perfectly wrong. We have a pretty clear idea of what a zero-growth world would look like. It would either freeze the existing inequities between rich and poor, or it would see a violent struggle to divide up a pie that is no longer growing. Neither scenario holds out the slightest promise for such values as human rights or democracy. The existing inequities would have to be brutally defended or brutally altered. I daresay that this root insight of political economy is by now widely recognized, even on the Left (except, perhaps, among the remaining holdouts of romantic environmentalism).

Secondly, successful development means the large-scale and sustained movement of people from a condition of degrading poverty to a minimally decent standard of living. In insisting on this point, I continue to give credence to the critique (mostly from the Left) of the earlier development theories, which tended to see economic growth as a synonym for development rather than as its precondition. On that point, the critics were right: the most impressive growth rates can cover up massively inequitable distribution of the benefits of growth; there can be growth without development, and there can even be what André Gunder Frank has called "the development of underdevelopment." Brazil in the early 1970's was a striking example of this—staggering economic growth, so maldistributed that abject misery (measured by hunger, infant mortality, low life expectancy, and the like) not only continued unabated but, in parts of Brazil, worsened.

I would even go a step farther in conceding a point to the Left. The advocates of liberation theology have contributed a phrase, "the preferential option for the poor," which sounds like a bad English translation of a bad Spanish translation of neo-Marxist German, but means simply that one is morally obligated to look at things from the viewpoint of the poor. Fair enough. After all, it was Dr. Johnson, not exactly a premature Marxist, who said that "a decent provision for the poor is the true test of civilization."

In focusing on this particular criterion for defining successful development I am invoking, of course, the ideal of equity; but I am *not* invoking "equality," a utopian category that can only obfuscate the moral issues. It is inequitable and immoral that, next door to each other, some human beings are starving while others gorge themselves. To make this situation more equitable and thus morally tolerable, the starvation must stop and the poor must become richer. This goal can be attained without the rich becoming poorer. In other words, I do not assume the need for a level-

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ing of income distribution. Western societies (including the United States) have demonstrated that dramatic improvements are possible in the condition of the poor without great changes in income distribution; the poor can get richer even while the rich get richer too. And there are good economic grounds for thinking that income-leveling policies in the Third World inhibit growth, with the poor paying the biggest price for this inhibition. "Equality" is an abstract and empirically murky ideal; it should be avoided in assessing the success or failure of development strategies.

Third criterion: development cannot be called successful if the achievements of economic growth and equitable distribution come at the price of massive violations of human rights. This criterion applies to both of the calculi formulated in *Pyramids of Sacrifice*. In 1974 it seemed to me and to many others that China offered an illustration of the "calculus of pain." We now know that the economic and egalitarian achievements of Maoism were themselves largely fictitious. Still, I believe that I was correct to insist that, *even if* it were true that Maoism had vanquished hunger among China's poor, this achievement could not morally justify the horrors inflicted by the regime—horrors that entailed the killing of millions of human beings and the imposition of a merciless totalitarian rule on the survivors.

As for the "calculus of meaning," Iran now offers a good instance. The Shah's regime undoubtedly achieved economic growth, it ameliorated the condition of many of the poor (even if a corrupt elite greatly enriched itself in the process), and its violations of human rights, ugly though they were, did not come even close to the horrors of Maoism (not to mention the nightmare of terror of the Khomeini regime). However, as Grace Goodell has persuasively argued, the reform program of the Shah systematically trampled on the mores and values by which the largest number of Iranians gave meaning to their lives. It was a program of rapid and coercive modernization, contemptuous of tradition and of indigenous institutions. Logically enough, this alliance of technocrats, profiteers, and secret police evoked a neotraditionalist reaction. The tragic consequences following the triumph of these reactionaries, and the fact that the new regime has worsened the condition of the Iranian people, cannot provide an *ex-post-facto* justification of the Shah's policies. (By analogy, the Bolshevik Revolution was a catastrophe for the Russian people; but it does not follow from this that czarism, though in many ways morally superior to its successor regime, was a wise and humane system.)

It should be clear what I mean by "massive violations of human rights": mass killings, concentration camps, forced deportations, torture, separation of families, pervasive intimidation—in other words, the standard practices of 20th-century totalitarianism. But I should stress at the same time that I do *not* include democracy as a necessary element in this criterion for successful development. Democracy is the best available form of government in the modern world; moreover, I consider it the only reliable protection of human rights under modern conditions.* In the long run, I also believe that democracy and development are necessarily linked realities. All the same, the case regrettably cannot be made that democracy is indispensable to successful development.

ARMED with these criteria for development we may now turn to the evidence that has accumulated over the last ten years. Perhaps the most important piece of evidence is negative: the absence of even a single successful case of socialist development in the Third World.

Even in the early 1970's it should not have been news that socialism is not good for economic growth, and also that it shows a disturbing propensity toward totalitarianism (with its customary accompaniment of terror). What has become clearer is that socialism even fails to deliver on its own egalitarian promises (the second criterion of success). In country after country, socialist equality has meant a leveling down of most of the population, which is then lorded over by a highly privileged and by no means leveled elite.

Put simply, socialist equality is shared poverty by serfs, coupled with the monopolization of both privilege and power by a small (increasingly hereditary) aristocracy. That this was so of the Soviet Union had already been accepted by most Western and Third World leftists by the late 1960's and early 1970's. What is evident now is that a Soviet-style *nomenklatura* seems to spring up predictably wherever socialism extends. It has done so in China, in Vietnam, in Cuba, and in such lesser socialist experiments as Angola and Mozambique. None of these countries, not even Cuba, is directly or entirely under Soviet rule. It seems to be the intrinsic genius of socialism to produce these modern facsimiles of feudalism.

The fact that there is not a single case of economically successful and non-totalitarian socialism has begun to sink in. (The social democracies of the West, of course, should not be subsumed under the category of socialism.) The monumental failures of Maoism, failures proclaimed to the world not by its old enemies but directly from Peking, have made a deep impression in Asia; so have the horrors of the triumphant socialist revolution in Indochina. In Asia more than elsewhere in the Third World, there now seems a new openness to the possibility of capitalist models, even if the word itself is avoided in favor of circumlocutions like "market mechanisms" or euphemisms like "pluralism." The radical shift from a socialist to a

* I have explained why at some length in "Democracy for Everyone?," COMMENTARY, September 1983.

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capitalist model in Sri Lanka illustrates this tendency, especially because it came about as the result of open debate and democratic politics.

Two cases touched upon in *Pyramids of Sacrifice*, Peru and Tanzania, are interesting in this connection. The socialist experiments of the Velasco regime ended in economic disaster, after which, prudently, the military handed the mess back to a civilian government that stopped the experiments. It is not clear, however, to what extent the brief and limited socialist policies of the Velasco regime can be blamed for economic problems that antedated it.

The case of Tanzania—an economic fiasco—is much more instructive. Here was a country that in the early 1970's had much going for it—reasonably good resources (especially in agriculture); a dubiously democratic but relatively humane government led by Julius Nyerere, an intelligent and attractive leader by most standards; and freedom from foreign domination. What is more, Tanzania had long been the darling of development-aid institutions, which poured vast amounts of money into the country. Whatever else one may say about the economic and political failures of Tanzania, these cannot be blamed on corrupt leadership, on bad Soviet influence, or on the hostility or destabilizing policies of Western capitalism. The fiasco was self-made.

Tanzania's much-vaunted Ujamaa program of socialist agriculture has come close to destroying the agricultural productivity of the country. As the program has failed economically, it has become more coercive. The government had at first tried to persuade peasants to move to Ujamaa villages by means of incentives; by the late 1970's, pressure had to be applied. As for the non-agricultural sector of the economy, small enough to begin with, the "para-statal organizations" that operate it have succeeded in running that little into the ground. This particular failure has been augmented by systematic pressures on the Indian minority, who (in Tanzania as in other East African countries) comprise much of the small entrepreneurial class. Not surprisingly, the economic failures have gone hand in hand with increasing political repressiveness; Tanzania today is even less democratic and certainly less humane than it was in 1974.

Events in China and Brazil, the two countries discussed at greatest length in *Pyramids of Sacrifice*, have been momentous. In the book I rejected the Maoist model because of its human costs; now the model must also be rejected because of the costs brought about by economic and social mismanagement. To put it differently, where I rejected Maoism on non-Maoist grounds, now the Maoist experiment can be shown to have failed even by its own criteria of success.

Brazil is a more complicated case. Before the oil shock and the ensuing indebtedness crisis, there were some modest signs of a more equitable distribution of the benefits of growth. There has also been an impressive move from harsh military dictatorship toward democracy. It is noteworthy that Fernando Henrique Cardoso, the father of Latin American "dependency theory," is today a federal senator of the largest opposition party and speaks more in the moderate tones of Swedish social democracy than in the fiery neo-Marxist rhetoric of the early 1970's. All the same, by the criteria set forth above, Brazil cannot be cited as a case of successful development, and cannot (yet) be used as an argument for capitalism.

One other case in the Americas, that of Jamaica, is interesting because it (like Sri Lanka) abruptly veered from a socialist to a capitalist course, and did so as a result of democratic politics. Jamaica, however, is beset with manifold troubles; the capitalist experiment of the Seaga regime is still very new; and the place of the experiment remains uncertain.

A NUMBER of other cases (such as the Ivory Coast) are sometimes cited in favor of capitalism. But these aside, the most dramatic and convincing success stories today, and the ones offering the strongest brief for capitalism, are in East Asia.

There is, first of all, the astounding instance of Japan. To be sure, Japan is no longer regarded as anything but a highly advanced industrial society —in some ways a more successful one than the societies of North America and Western Europe. This very achievement, however, is what makes Japan crucial for any responsible theory of development. Here is the only non-Western society that has moved from underdevelopment to full-blown modernity within the span of a century. Moreover, whatever variables may have been in play (political, cultural, geographical, and so on), Japan is a successful *capitalist* society. How did the Japanese pull this off? And can others learn from their success? Not surprisingly, Third World politicians and intellectuals, even in countries that have reason to fear Japanese power, such as those of Southeast Asia, talk of the "Japanese model" as something to be admired and emulated.

But Japan no longer stands alone as a success story. There are the four countries of what may be called the Asian prosperity crescent—South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore. Despite important differences among them, each has employed an exuberantly capitalist strategy to move out of underdevelopment to the newly designated status of "New Industrialized Country" (or NIC). And this has happened with breathtaking speed and thoroughness, within the span of two decades. In no meaningful sense can these countries any longer be regarded as parts of the Third World (though Hong Kong, depending on China's policy toward it, may fall back into underdevelopment in the near future). There are even grounds for thinking that their prosperity is push-

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ing into other countries, especially in Southeast Asia (Malaysia, Thailand, and possibly Indonesia).

South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore are successful by all three of the criteria listed above. Their rates of economic growth continue to be remarkable. They have completely wiped out Third-World-type misery within their borders. What is more, they (especially Taiwan and South Korea) have forcefully challenged the so-called "Kuznets curve" by combining high growth with a highly egalitarian income distribution. Their regimes, while not democratic, are authoritarian in a generally benign way (especially when compared with others in the region).

These four countries, only one of which, the Republic of Singapore, operates within the United Nations system, are increasingly attracting the attention of analysts of development and are more and more frequently cited as examples to be emulated. They constitute the most important evidence in favor of a capitalist path of development.

WHAT, then, do we know today about development? We know, or should know, that socialism is a mirage that leads nowhere, except to economic stagnation, collective poverty, and various degrees of tyranny. We also know that capitalism has been dramatically successful, if in a limited number of underdeveloped countries. Needless to say, we also know that capitalism has failed in a much larger number of cases. What we do *not* know is why this is so.

It seems to me that the issue of socialism should be put aside for good in any serious discussion of development; it belongs, if anywhere, to the field of political pathology or *Ideologiekritik*. The question that should be of burning urgency (theoretical as well as practical) is why capitalism has succeeded in some places and failed in others. What are the variables of success and failure? That is the crucial question.

The success stories of East Asia have, very understandably, led some analysts to think that an important causal factor may be the culture of the region. A "post-Confucianist hypothesis" proposes that all the successful societies and ethnic groups (notably the overseas Chinese) share a common economic ethic derived from Confucianism, deemed to be a functional equivalent of Max Weber's famous "Protestant ethic." But Confucianism is by no means the only cultural element that may be relevant. Others may include the political traditions of East Asia, patterns of family and household, and different components of the area's religious heritage (such as Mahayana Buddhism).

One does not have to be a disciple of Weber to want these hypotheses addressed. Indeed, if one is concerned with Third World development in general, one would dearly love to see them falsified—not out of antagonism toward East Asia, but because the East Asian success stories can only become models for other parts of the world if they do not hinge on a non-exportable cultural factor. One might advise an African country to adopt the economic policies of South Korea; one can hardly advise the Africans to adopt Korean culture.

In *Pyramids of Sacrifice* I put forward a "postulate of ignorance": we are compelled to act politically even when we do not know many of the factors determining the situation in which we find ourselves. I formulated this postulate in the context of recommending a non-doctrinaire approach to development policy. I would reiterate it today. We are less ignorant than we were ten years ago, but there is still much that we do not know. Those charged with political responsibility in the matter of development, however, do not have the luxury of the social scientist who can always say that more research is needed. Science is, in principle, infinitely patient; politicians must act out of the urgencies of the moment. In such a situation the morally sensitive politician should be fully conscious of the fact that, whatever he chooses to do—and often the range of choices is narrow—he will be gambling. The evidence today strongly suggests that it is much safer to bet on capitalism.

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European Diary

Walter Laqueur

Liverpool, London, and Points South

AFTER a considerable delay American commentators, official and unofficial, have finally discovered the decline and fall of Europe. *Newsweek* has reported economic stagnation and a "political malaise which darkens the future of a once proud and powerful continent." Growing doubts have been expressed about the survivability of European culture, and there is anxiety that Europe's identity will be overwhelmed in an imminent demographic catastrophe. The European Economic Community (EEC), we are told, is in disarray, and mass strikes are reported from Britain and France. Stern warnings about the future of the NATO alliance have been given to the Europeans by American spokesmen.

Much of the news is correct, but it is still not clear why these anxieties should have arisen in the spring of 1984. When Constantinople fell to the Turks in 1453 it took about a year until Paris found out; now, in the age of instant communication, the time lag seems to have grown to a decade. It was only yesterday that a whole literature was produced exuding satisfaction over the state of Europe, its self-confidence, prosperity, and political stability. For every article written by the late Raymond Aron (or a few others), there were literally hundreds decrying such Cassandras. My own piece, "Hollanditis" (COMMENTARY, August 1981), was dismissed as the product of a feverish political imagination. Countless speeches, books, and articles demonstrated beyond any shadow of a doubt that Europe had become one of the pillars of the new "pentagonal" world order. American residents and tourists could no longer afford Europe—was any additional proof needed to show how much had changed since the days of CARE parcels and the Marshall Plan?

And now, quite suddenly, the pendulum has swung to the other extreme. The new pessimism is closer to the true state of affairs in Europe, but it too contains elements of exaggeration; it is based, at least in part, on faulty reasoning, and it comes at the wrong moment. To say that Europe is not in good shape is no more than to state the obvious; it has been the case for a long time. But the chances of a recovery, while far from certain, seem a little better today than they did in the recent past. It was predicted that civil war would result from the stationing of the missiles in Western Europe, but the skies did not fall in. The Left-of-Center governments of Italy and Spain have shown surprising political aptitude and staying power; and as for Eurocommunism, that mighty new avalanche on the European scene, today it reminds one more of the snows of yesteryear. One year ago, industrial production was down in every West European country; today it is up everywhere. True, the conflicts within the EEC have become acute. But precisely for this reason there is more hope now that the inevitable storm will clear the air.

The main problem is not the state of the economy. Not long ago I visited Brussels and there was nothing in the outward life of the city pointing to a deep economic crisis; nor were there any signs that the ethnic divisions between the Walloons and the Flemish were turning into an armed conflict. Brussels is now a cosmopolitan city and quite prosperous. But once one leaves the Belgian capital for the South in the direction of Charleroi, with its old metal industry, or the mining regions of the Borinage—Van Gogh country—it is a different story altogether.

In Britain such differences are even more striking. It is less than two hundred miles as the crow flies from Surrey, Hampshire, and Kent to Liverpool, once Britain's third largest city, the home of the Beatles and two of the best soccer clubs in the land. Never a particularly pretty town, it is now a very sad sight indeed. Once upon a time it was a vital, bustling place; today no ship can be seen in the docks, the wharves and warehouses are empty. Over the last two decades the population has decreased by almost one-third; in the last decade a quarter of the city's jobs have disappeared. The inner city, which was the site last summer of one of Britain's worst race riots, is a shambles. Liverpool's municipal council is dom-

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inated by Militant, one of the self-styled Trotskyite factions within the Labor party. Militant wants to declare a general strike against the decaying capitalist system and defy the government by intentionally overspending and forcing the city to go bankrupt.

The problem with ravaged Liverpool is, in an extreme form, that of the Midlands in general—of traditional industries no longer needed, of a lack of foresight and initiative in investing in new ventures. There have been some steps in the right direction of late. More than a hundred acres of docks filled with rubbish are being transformed into an enormous park exhibiting different kinds of gardens. This will, it is hoped, become one of the biggest exhibitions in Europe and eventually develop into an annual festival. It has also been decided to build a new maritime museum and a Beatles museum. But Liverpool will not be saved by museums and exhibitions alone. It needs a new infusion of the entrepreneurial spirit which was once so characteristic of this part of England—the first industrialized region in the first industrialized nation.

Elsewhere in Europe, too, leading port cities have suffered decline as a result of the changes in the pattern of transport, and the corresponding downfall of related industries. The chief merchants of Hamburg and Bremen—particularly the latter—have been equally helpless to cope with the problems besetting these city states, and the Social Democrats who constitute the local government have not excelled in new ideas and initiatives. But Hamburg and to a lesser extent even Bremen have all kinds of smaller industries and other enterprises which provide work for at least some of those who have become "redundant," and good care has been taken of the quality of life in these cities. There are few volunteers to leave Bremen, however bad the employment situation.

In London, at a lunch given by a minister of the crown for a foreign dignitary, I was seated between two leading British industrialists, whose companies are household names in Britain and abroad. How was business? They agreed that it had seldom been so good. What was their main problem? To get enough technically qualified personnel; they had to raid their competitors to keep up with demand. On the other hand, they complained about the various barriers still obstructing free trade within the European Economic Community. True, direct customs have been abolished, but German government orders still go to German corporations, and the same is true elsewhere. All kinds of irrelevant safety regulations also discriminate against foreign competitors. What of U.S. and Japanese competition? They had no misgivings with regard to the prospects of their specialized products.

British productivity has recently risen more sharply than that of other European countries; so has the rate of growth. These gains have been made at substantial political cost, resulting in bankruptcies and the loss of jobs. But every European government will have to suffer similar hardships in the years to come; there will be no smooth transition to new patterns of employment. Still, the problems are not insoluble, and if Liverpool is one side of contemporary Britain, the prosperous South is the other.

Touring the Cotswolds and the West country, one sees many new industries, including high technology, many new housing developments, new stores. Twenty years ago, this was not a prosperous part of the British isles; today, though the holiday season has not even started, there are enormous traffic jams and the hotels, from modest "bed and breakfast" establishments to the five-star Imperial, are fully booked. There are hundreds of marinas with sailing boats of every size and description, motorboats, small and big private yachts. The pre-season feeling (the counterpart of a certain post-season atmosphere admirably described in one of Thomas Mann's novels) is that, miners' strike or not, this will be a good year for Devon and Cornwall.

Once this was a farming region; the sedate resorts were strictly reserved for the upper classes. Rudyard Kipling wrote that "Torquay is such a place as I do desire to upset it by dancing through it with nothing on but my spectacles. Villas, clipped hedges and shaven lawns, fat old ladies with respirators and obese landaus. . . ." Today there are no more obese landaus and few fat old ladies, but a lot of chain stores and cheap restaurants; and if Kipling did dance in the streets with nothing on but his glasses, he would get scant attention—there are greater attractions all along the beaches.

The condition of England, then, is not universal decline, but the reemergence of two nations, of North and South, of the majority which earns good money and the three million unemployed, of rising and declining industries. The problem is polarization and the breaking of that social consensus which is now needed more than ever and which still exists in most other European countries. Whatever Mrs. Thatcher's virtues, she is not an integrative national leader; she commands respect for her toughness and her gut reactions, not for her ideas and vision. As for the Labor party, it has in Neil Kinnock a new leader who as an individual does not have an enemy. But Labor's leadership as a whole is the least intelligent ever. Anti-democratic forces have taken over entire unions and major branches; their radicalism owes more to Luddism and xenophobia than to Marxism. This is no longer the Labor party of Ernest Bevin or his antagonist, Aneurin Bevan. It is a new phenomenon in British his-

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tory, this coalition of sectarians, social workers, and employees of dying industries; perhaps it is no more than a passing aberration, perhaps common sense will prevail in the end as it so often has in this country. But there is no certainty that it will.

Essen

THE Ruhr is the largest single industrial conurbation in Europe: for a century it has been a synonym for iron, coal, and steel; for Krupp and Mannesmann; for armaments and guns; for impenetrable smoke, the blackened faces of the miners, the German version of Blake's satanic mills. But one morning not long ago, from the top floor of the Essen municipal building, the tallest in Europe, the view was almost perfect, so clear was the air. No wonder, for not a single ton of steel is produced in Essen any longer. Of fifty coal mines only one is left, and this will go out of business in 1986. The biggest taxpayer in Essen is no longer Krupp, but Coca-Cola.

Not only has the air become clear, there is a big green belt and the Ruhr river is now one of the cleanest in Europe. But the ecologists' delight is the nightmare of the economists (and of the politicians). When the *Bundesrepublik* was founded less than four decades ago, there was considerable opposition to the creation of the superstate of North Rhine-Westphalia, for it was so much richer and stronger than the rest. This was certainly true at the time; more than one-third of all German exports then came from this region. But today this rich state, which formerly produced so much wealth, has become Bonn's problem child. Steel production has declined by 30 percent in ten years, and as the industrial base has shrunk, so has the state's population (from 5.7 million in 1965 to 5.3 in 1984). The growth industries are now situated near Munich and in the Stuttgart region. Some Ruhr cities such as Duisburg and Gelsenkirchen have been on the verge of bankruptcy; unemployment in some centers is very high indeed.

Yet walking along Kettwiger Strasse in Essen, let alone the Koenigsallee in Duesseldorf, one does not have the feeling of impending disaster. The new department stores and expensive boutiques are full. It is a far cry from the scenes of mass unemployment, of starvation, of street riots which I remember from the days of my own youth in the Germany of the early 30's. I asked to see the slums. My host took me to the predominantly Turkish quarter, not a very inspiring neighborhood, but comparing not unfavorably with many parts of New York, Philadelphia, Detroit, or Los Angeles. We passed a major building site; a big opera house is to be constructed, designed by Alvar Aalto. How could the city afford it at a time of crisis? Why not, they had spent prudently in years past and had a good treasurer. Who was he? A Christian Democrat. A Christian Democrat in a city ruled by the SPD? (All cities in the Ruhr have huge Social Democratic majorities.) Why not, he was a good man, and anyway, there are no tremendous differences between the two major parties on the municipal level. And what did the far Left have to say? Who knows, there are not many of them around here. This is a working-class area: the leftists are concentrated in administrative jobs, social work, and education. . . .

There is a greater willingness to cooperate in German politics than ever before, and there is also an essential toughness which characterizes these people, a mixture of immigrants from various parts of Germany, Poland, and lately also other parts of Europe. They complain vociferously but, like the people in the Midlands, they will not give up easily. Unlike the residents of Liverpool they have a leadership which knows that confrontational politics will not work, for not even Trotskyites can sell coal and steel for which there is no demand. The old industrial giants such as Krupp, Thyssen, and Mannesmann began to diversify a long time ago; they went into trading and high technology, and they bought shares of Daimler-Benz. Some of these ventures were ill-starred and a few seem curious: Volkswagen is breeding cattle in Brazil, BASF (the chemical trust) produces white wine, and Grundig is running hotels. But more enterprise was shown by these corporations than those in Britain and France, and it is now beginning to pay off.

Many European businessmen and economists are strongly inclined toward pessimism, and the Germans more so than the rest. Last year the statistics seemed to bear out such pessimism. The balance sheets of the largest German corporations showed a negative picture. But there was clearly something wrong with the statistics, for every visitor to the country could see that the great majority of the population was living quite well: a clear impossibility according to the figures. This year, the mood suddenly changed for the better: exports during the first quarter of 1984 were 25 percent higher than during the same period the year before. (Actually, they had been quite high even in 1983.)

The German car industry is said to have fallen behind the rest of the world. But Volkswagen again has the most advanced production lines in the world, robots and all. Has Germany missed the boat in high technology? It still manages to be the world leader in nuclear research and reactor-building, in space reconnaissance, space platforms, and modules. Siemens, the foremost electrical firm and largest employer in Germany, has been criticized for excessive caution in its management and planning—very much in con-

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trast to the practice of its founders in the last century, who were true pioneers. Yet Siemens is still matching the sales of General Electric and Westinghouse in the Third World.

So much, then, for the state of the economy. But what of the deep-seated pessimism within the younger generation, the "no future" slogans, the seemingly irresistible growth of the Greens? I remember a conversation about a year ago in a little car on the Autobahn near Kassel. My interlocutor, a graduate technology student in his late twenties, had kindly agreed to drive me to my hotel from the home of his father, a classmate whom I had not seen for many years. "Why do you assume," he demanded, "that ten or twenty years from now we shall still be alive? My friends and I firmly believe that the end is near." I replied, if I remember correctly, that while my own life experience had not been such as to make me an incurable optimist, I saw no plausible reason to agree with him. But I did frequently hear similar views while touring Germany in the months that followed. At church meetings the general theme was "We are afraid" or "Be afraid." In the windows of the bookstores such titles as *The German Neurosis, The German House on Fire, The Fears of the Germans* were prominently displayed along with novels describing the last days of Germany.

Of late the fear boom has somewhat abated, but some young (and not so young) Germans have gone on writing and talking loudly about fear and anxiety. Do they also suffer more acutely? Hard as I tried in my search for the *mysterium tremendum*, the overwhelming feeling of impending total destruction, I did not find it in the streets, the buses, the railways of contemporary Germany. I looked in vain for people undergoing the agonies of Tantalus in department stores and *Urangst* on the soccer fields. Nor was there any sign of extreme dejection, or of accumulated stress and tension, even in the universities and the churches. The casual visitor from afar is likely to conclude that "the great fear" is nothing more than a matter of attitudinizing by journalists and littérateurs who have run out of other subjects of conversation, or by certain public figures who cultivate *fin de siècle* or *fin de millénaire* moods for obvious political ends. And since intellectual fashions do not last forever, the great fear is now on the way out.

All this is true, but it is still not the whole truth. There is a generation in Germany—and the same goes for other North European countries—now in its late twenties and thirties, that is very much under the influence of the whole Eco-Pax syndrome. Those people entered the political scene during the past decade, and while they do not constitute a majority even of their own age group, they are still at the center of public attention.

About their views, hopes, complaints, expectations, there is now an enormous literature financed by corporations such as German Shell and also by various government ministries. The consensus of this literature is that youth protest should be viewed not as a "classic conflict" between the generations but as a response to the crisis of the industrial system and of representative democracy. It signifies the emergence (and not just among the young) of new social groups directly hit by the transition to post-industrial society.

During my peregrinations in Germany I made it my business to visit not just universities but also the upper grades of secondary schools and even an occasional *Diskothek*, to talk and to listen. It did not take long to realize that the reports and analyses of a post-materialist generation searching for new spiritual values (either because they are dissatisfied with prosperity or because of "unsolved social problems" that have rendered them marginal and disaffected) are badly out of date and have to be rewritten. The study of the young is a perilous field —it takes a few years to observe and collect the data and a few more years to write and publish. By that time a new generation has made its appearance on the scene, quite different from the one described in the learned books and articles just arriving in the libraries.

Different in what way? It is too early to describe in detail the character of young men and women who were not even born when Rudi Dutschke and Danny Cohn-Bendit unfurled the banner of revolt. But it is my clear impression, borne out by discussions with teachers, that the generation of 1984 has no more in common with the rebels of 1967 than with Hitler or Napoleon. Their mood is different and so are their language, their cultural interests, their values, and their political orientation. They are reading other books, they listen to other records, and they have no interest in the new German cinema (fairy tales have become enormously popular both on paper and on the screen). Having grown up in freedom, they do not complain about oppression; on the contrary, there is a certain longing for authority and leadership. Patriotism and *Heimat* (homeland) are back, and the volumes of MEGA (the German acronym for the collected works of Marx and Engels) purchased by their older brothers have been relegated to the basement together with old furniture and clothes that are no longer in fashion. So too with sex, one of the main issues of the "great refusal" of the recent past. Today, needless to say, sex is not dead, but the endless debates about it are now considered a great bore.

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Brussels-Zurich

THE quickest way to get from Belgium to Switzerland is on the express train that stops at Cologne and then goes along the Rhine, passing the Lorelei and other famous tourist attractions. But there is another way, less fast and less picturesque, hardly ever frequented by tourists, which leads through the main battlefields of Europe of the last two hundred years, from Waterloo to Bastogne via Sedan to Verdun and Metz. Except for the signposts and the cemeteries one would not know that great armies once confronted each other in this region, and that many people died here. There are no tanks to be seen now and no soldiers; today it is Europe's main industrial battlefield.

There was a time when the annexation of Longwy (which is French, near the border with Belgium and Luxembourg) was one of Germany's main war aims because of its industrial importance. Today the Mitterrand government probably wishes it had never heard of Longwy because this steel town is the center of violent trouble in Lorraine. For a few days in March the whole region was cut off from the rest of the country, government buildings were stormed, and then, on April 13, the great "march on Paris" took place.

The French steel industry has been kept afloat only by massive subsidies (many times higher than in neighboring Germany) which the country can no longer afford and for whose products there is only limited demand. For the local right-wingers this is the fault of the "Socialist-Communist dictatorship"; the Communists and the left-wing Socialists for their part put the blame on the European Economic Community. Both explanations are equally false, though successive French governments are by no means blameless. Many of the installations now closed are among the most modern in the world, built at great cost only a few years ago. When Mitterrand came to power in 1981, the Union of the Left actually promised to expand the coal and steel industry! It was a case of gross miscalculation by people who forever talked about planning. Today, that same government is causing unemployment and has to keep wages down.

Frenchmen have taken it badly, the government coalition may break up one of these days, and the more militant unions are turning against Mitterrand. But the unions in France are relatively weak and disunited; nor do the Communists have a great desire to return to their shrinking ghetto. Most thoughtful Frenchmen accept that every French government would have had to face the present difficulties, that many problems are not specifically French but common to all of Europe, and that it is probably better that the painful but necessary operation should be carried out by left-wing surgeons than by those of the Right.

As one passes from Lorraine to Alsace one enters another world, and one is bound to feel some sympathy with the ecologists. Alsace has been industrialized to a certain extent: there is now an oil refinery near Mulhouse, some automobile plants and chemical factories. But it has remained basically agricultural; it is still a country of monasteries and gardens, vineyards and old castles, of the Isenheim Altar and the Strassburg cathedral. Time has not stood still: the little village in which some of my ancestors once lived is now virtually part of Colmar and in the street one hears as much Turkish and Arabic as French. But the specific character of this region, the cradle of European civilization, has not disappeared. It is still more obvious in small places like Selestat or Eguisheim or Riquewihr than in the big cities.

Having suffered a great deal in their history, the Alsatians are a tolerant people: I doubt whether they spend many sleepless nights because of the *Sinnkrise*. This is still a wholesome world, largely unscathed, and as one walks at night through the crooked streets alongside half-thatched houses with their gabled roofs, one wonders whether Alsace could not teach the rest of the continent a lesson or two. Unfortunately, the chances that Western Europe will become one great Alsace are not good.

Zurich

IT WAS in Zurich, in September 1946, that Winston Churchill made one of his great speeches, about the need for a new initiative "to help this turbulent and mighty continent to take its rightful place with other groupings and help to shape the destinies of men." Europe at present, he said, was little more than the plaything of outside powers; united, it could overcome all its internal difficulties and again be a great power in the world.

It was a fine speech, but soon afterward Churchill made it known that his vision of a united Europe did not encompass Britain, which belonged rather to the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth has long since disappeared and the British now belong to the EEC, but they still have not become ardent Europeans. Nor, for that matter, have most of the other member nations. Even in the countries in which Europeanism was strongest—West Germany and Benelux—there is now a great deal of disappointment. European party leaders continue to make speeches about the need for Europe to reassert itself. Some extreme spirits call for the dissolution of NATO and a neutral Europe. But never fear, if the alliance should fall apart it will be as the result of American annoyance and loss of

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patience, not of a European Declaration of Independence.

For better or worse, it seems unlikely that anything of great importance will happen in Europe in the next few years. In the absence of an immediate outside threat, Western Europe will be preoccupied with its internal affairs; it will leave the U.S. to take care of global politics, and will be attacked for doing so.

The trouble with Europe is not so much decadence—though there are elements of decadence in more countries than one—as the fact that the shelter provided by America over several decades has impaired the vision of not a few Europeans and given rise to a climate in which real dangers are not recognized, and unreal threats are conjured up.

To a considerable extent the problem of Europe is the crisis of Social Democracy. But there are cross-currents even in this river. If there has been a fairly strong drift toward neutralism among the North European Social Democratic parties, the Social Democrats of France, Italy, Spain, and Portugal, who are in power or share power, are behaving differently. Anti-Americanism is not a major issue in these countries.

The great majority of Europeans want to remain free, which is to say that there is a reasonable chance that over a number of years, perhaps a decade, they will have gone through their learning process. But is there that much time left, or will the military balance of power have meanwhile decisively shifted, so that Europe will have far less freedom of action than today? There is no certainty, only some room for hope. The European crisis is largely one of mood. And for reasons unknown even to the most profound historians and the most astute students of politics, the mood of countries is given to sudden and far-reaching changes for seemingly trivial "objective" reasons—and sometimes for no obvious reasons at all.

And so, whether one surveys the European scene from the Cotswolds or the Ruhr, or looks down on Lake Zurich from one of the surrounding mountains, there is room for concern and some pity but not for a feeling of impending doom and apocalyptic visions. This should be left to the *fin de siècle* industry, which is working overtime to counteract the effects of the cautious optimism which, temporarily at least, is getting the upper hand in Europe.

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Call of the Wild

John P. Sisk

THE late Henry Arthur FitzRoy Somerset, tenth Duke of Beaufort, must have given little comfort to English animal lovers. When his death at eighty-three was announced early this year it was revealed that the Duke had by his own estimation spent four thousand days in the saddle pursuing foxes, few of which, one must assume, evaded the pursuit. One must also assume that only the most knowledgeable traditionalist could remember a time when the hunting of animals in England could be represented not only as a necessary cultivation of military virtues but as a morale-raising demonstration of the triumph of human reason and skill over animal instinct. Fox hunters, fortunately, had the special advantage of being engaged with a creature that continued to get a bad press at a time when late in the 18th century it was no longer easy to use traditional justifications for other kinds of hunting. As Keith Thomas points out in *Man and the Natural World*, the fox was considered to be a subtle, pilfering foe, a conscious villain and midnight pillager.

Whether the Duke of Beaufort still thought of the fox this way two centuries later is doubtful, but his four thousand days in the saddle are an indication of the lengths to which humans will go to make possible a ceremonial encounter with the wild. Of course, long before that the English had learned how to encounter wild nature in the ceremonials of poetry, painting, and landscaping—though, as Thomas points out, "the taste for the wild and irregular was much more likely to seduce the well-to-do than the poor." One is tempted to say that this has been less true in America where there has always been plenty of wild and irregular nature left over after nurture has done its worst. But these things are relative. We are at least as worried about the survival of the wolf and the grizzly bear as the English once were about the survival of natural landscapes against the encroachment of formal gardens and symmetrically cultivated farm lands. After all, we had to adapt as best we could to the announcement by the Superintendent of the Census that as of 1890 we could no longer think of a frontier line separating the settled from the unsettled West—an announcement that raised the disturbing possibility that a wilderness experience crucial to our national well being was about to end.

For Americans the childhood classic on the value of the wilderness experience was once Jack London's *The Call of the Wild*. In this 1903 novel the dog Buck, a thoroughly domesticated mix of Scotch Shepherd and Saint Bernard, is kidnapped from his California home and taken to the Klondike, where in the service of his master, John Thornton, he becomes a super sledge dog. Intermittently Buck experiences the call of the wild, and eventually, after the murder of his master by Indians, he answers the call and becomes the leader of a wolf pack, "his great throat a-bellow as he sings a song of the younger world." It is obvious to an adult reader, if not to a perceptive youngster, that Buck is no more a mere dog than Melville's Moby Dick is a mere whale or Faulkner's Old Ben a mere bear. He is, in fact, a quite sensitive human being who, one might say, disguises himself as a dog in order to liberate his Nietzschean potential from emasculating domesticity.

But one must say more than that. *The Call of the Wild* was ultimately chosen by the Boy Scouts of America for Every Boy's Library as one of those stories "in which the heroes have the characteristics boys so much admire—unquenchable courage, immense resourcefulness, absolute fidelity, conspicuous greatness." Buck, of course, has all these virtues, and through the alchemy of youthful imagination he no doubt comes across as a champion worthy of emulation, not as a subversive advocate of a reversion to primitive ways. London's novel, like Edgar Rice Burroughs's Tarzan books, belongs with the fictions of childhood and adolescence that put us in touch with that *mysterium tremendum* that exists beyond the threshold of conscious civilized life. One may hope that in due time its readers will move on to Conrad's *The Heart of Darkness* or Golding's *Lord of the Flies* and learn that the call of the wild can be a sinister siren call against which some hearers have very limited powers of resistance—perhaps even learn that the stories of Buck and Tarzan are adult fantasies of the utopianly liberated id.

Whatever one reads, however, the call of the wild, seductively varied as it is, is part of the mood music of our culture. London's canine hero is having ahead of time, for instance, the experience we see the enraptured German Nazis having in Leni Riefenstahl's 1934 documentary film *Triumph of the Will* or the no less enraptured young American Aquarians having in the documentary film of the 1969 Woodstock festival. More interestingly for the literary adult, Buck anticipates the experience of Connie Chatterley with the gamekeeper, Mellors, in D.H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. As

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the wilderness claims him for its own, Buck's experiences are analogically sexual (properly enough, since he will in time become the progenitor of a new super-breed of timber wolves):

> Life streamed through him in splendid flood, glad and rampant, until it seemed that it would burst him asunder in sheer ecstasy and pour forth generously over the world.

This is close to Connie's experience with Mellors in the Chatterley woods, especially in the section where in the wilderness of sex the shame bred by civilization is burned out of her and she is saved.

Connie anticipates O in Pauline Réage's *Story of O*, who also has the shame burned out of her in the process of demonstrating the paradox of self-transcending happiness in erotic slavery. Buck demonstrates this paradox as well when, his divided, civilized consciousness having been burned out of him, the wild possesses him as utterly as a master possesses a slave. Lawrence did not especially like dogs, but it is likely that he would have seen here an anticipation of his own conviction that our divided culture tempts us to define sexual experience as a culturally impeded effort to be overwhelmed by a wilderness force. One implication is that the truest freedom is beyond all consciousness of being free, which is the way it is with Tarzan in his jungle state, whether in Burroughs's version or in Hugh Hudson's new film *Greystoke: The Legend of Tarzan, Lord of the Apes*. This being the case, it is probably as safe to predict that some people will always be discovering Sade as a liberator from the tormenting false consciousness of civilization as it is to predict that other people will always be content to settle for fox hunting. Indeed, when communities attempt to ban or restrict pornography or prostitution, the problem often is not simply that other freedoms are involved but the opposition put up by the half-articulated conviction that the impersonal, or "pure," sex of pornography and prostitution is a manifestation of wilderness that merits the same conserving attention we give to wolves and grizzly bears. Something like this appears to have been on the mind of the late Jean Paulhan, member of the French Academy and editor of the *Nouvelle Revue Française*, when he wrote his preface to Réage's novel—along the way making the point that women "never cease obeying their nature, the call of their blood, that everything in them, even their minds, is sex."

LAWRENCE's Mellors, of course, is an imaginary figure even though when he holds forth on the evils of civilization he sounds remarkably like his creator. His genealogy takes us back to the medieval forest and another legendary figure who is the subject of Richard Bernheimer's *Wild Men in the Middle Ages*. Bernheimer defines the urge behind this figure as "the need to give external expression and a symbolically valid form to the impulses of reckless physical self-assertion which are hidden in all of us, but are normally kept under control." The wild man lives shamelessly in the forest like an animal for one of a variety of reasons, including unrequited love; he goes on all fours and has beast-like long hair; his powers of speech are limited if not nonexistent; he cannot control his passions and is excessively combative. Ultimately, the attitudes toward him reflect the range of possible attitudes toward the wild, the primitive, the natural, so that at one end of the scale he is barely above the beasts while at the other he is the 18th century's noble savage. In the beginning his opposite is the civilized courtly knight who is often represented in tapestry and woodcut rescuing his lady from the lusts of the wild man. A "major turning point in the history of European civilization," writes Bernheimer, occurs when "the wild man is sometimes allowed to win in works of art describing the conflict." At this point European society is getting ready for the reversal in which the life of the wild man becomes the ideal against which civilization is measured. In due time it will be society that one has to be afraid of—that "malevolent, partly insane beast," as Mellors the latter-day wild man puts it.

There is an understandable tendency to take the wild man out of the story world and locate him as a real figure in the real wild, whether as a child raised by wolves like the famous wild boy of Aveyron, or by apes like Tarzan, or as a menacing man-beast like the Abominable Snowman of the Himalayas and the American Bigfoot, also known as Sasquatch. Hard information about such creatures is hard to come by since, like the Loch Ness monster, they live in fastnesses into which neither Boy Scouts nor fox hunters can penetrate, but they seem to lack utterly the virtues of Tarzan or Buck. Their escapades are grist for the coarse mills of the tabloids. The *Weekly World News* has recently reported that a seven-foot-tall monster with long reddish brown hair had run off with a woman who, her husband had reason to believe, was quite happy to be run off with. A bit later the same publication reported the appearance in China of hairy supermen, stronger than normal humans and more resistant to disease—which makes them sound like those possessors of pure Nordic blood who, Heinrich Himmler believed, could be found in the mountains of Tibet. An Associated Press release early this year refers to a Chinese Wild Man Research Institute that is looking into reports of gargantuan hairy creatures at large in the forests of Hubei province. Last summer it was reported from Peking that there were wild and very hairy women, one of whom had raped a peasant, living on the lower slopes of Mount Everest. The indications are that all such creatures are as shameless as Shakespeare's Caliban and as little bothered by the crippling restrictions of Christianity as the encyclopedist Denis Diderot imagined the Tahitians to be when, late in the 18th century, they came to his attention by way of the reports of the French explorer Antoine de Bougainville.

THERE is nothing formally religious in the call of the wild as it comes from London's dog or Law-

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rence's gamekeeper; nevertheless, it has always been easy for young readers of London's novel, to say nothing of older readers of Faulkner's *The Bear*, to sense that they are in a world of supernal realities. In this at least they have some affinity with Rousseau, Wordsworth, and Emerson. The romantic encounter with nature generally entailed the discovery that organized religion is a way of protecting people from the unmediated force of spirit. The call of the wild is thus an inciter of the urge to merge—to achieve, like Réage's O, a state of possession that is symbiotic rather than metaphoric.

To one who takes the call seriously it is always a summons to quit the realm of the civilized, divided consciousness and come home, as Tarzan does at the end of *Greystoke*. However, if one cannot literally come home to the wild one can at least have the moral equivalent of a return. Drugs, orgies, states of passionate and shameless abandon are such equivalents, and for some people they are more satisfactory than those calculated sorties into primitive areas made safely possible by sophisticated survival gear and an assortment of freeze-dried foods. Authentic encounterers of the wild must, like passion lovers, be willing to risk all, even rape by hairy wild women. It is to be expected that such people will have little sympathy for fox hunters, who conserve foxes not out of any genuine affection for the wild but for the pleasure of being able to assault it with relative safety.

THE Greek Cynics were among the earliest of those who demonstrated a moral equivalent of being at home in the wild. They were as convinced as Rousseau or Lawrence's Mellors that civilization was an unnatural and generally bad state of affairs. For Diogenes of Sinope, says the late philosopher George Boas, "the natural was that which he could not discard and still live." Thus he and his followers had no alternative but to imitate the practice of animals in diet, sexual habits, scorn of privacy, and in the whole economy of living. However, this philosophy was lived out in full view of civilization, not out in the wilderness for an uncomprehending audience of wolves and foxes who needed no cynical schooling, since the idea was to dramatize the necessity of the burning out of shame. And where there is shame, as Mellors and Diogenes know, human beings are dangerously tame. The present miserable state of affairs will be over, Mellors says ironically to Connie, "When the last real man is killed, and they're *all* tame: white, black, yellow, all colors of tame ones: then they'll *all* be insane." The virginal Thoreau says in *Walden* that "he is blessed who is assured that the animal is dying out of him day by day, and the divine being established," but he is nevertheless in the Cynic tradition, his monastic cabin in the woods being the moral and critical equivalent of the wine jar in which Diogenes was supposed to live—and in which the latter too strove "to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life."

THE aim of the Cynics was to break down the barrier between the wild and the civilized by reducing the latter to the former. They were meat-eaters, but like the animals they imitated they ate their meat raw. London's superdog was a meat-eater: "A carnivorous animal, living on a straight meat diet, he was in full flower, at the high tide of his life, overspilling with vigor and vitality." Burroughs's Tarzan "more than the apes, craved and needed flesh," ate all he could get, and developed into a "wondrous combination of enormous strength with suppleness and speed." Colin W. Turnbull tells us in *The Mountain People* that the brutish and mean-spirited Iks of Uganda had been happy and sociable people when they were hunters and meat-eaters. According to the Western historian Francis Haines, the Plains Indians, who were often admired by white men for their vigor and vitality, could eat ten pounds of buffalo meat per day per person when it was available. The English, says Keith Thomas, tended not to eat their pets and looked down on the wild Irish because they ate horses, but otherwise they were great meat-eaters, and in the 18th century "were notorious for serving their beef underdone"—impelled, apparently, not by an ingrained cynicism but by the "long-established habit of praising red meat because it supposedly made men virile and courageous." It is hard to imagine a fox hunter who is not a meat-eater, though there is no record of a fox hunter eating the fox: it is cut up and fed to the dogs, possibly in the interest of making them virile and courageous. Even Thoreau, that part-time wild man, admitted that his impulse to a higher spiritual life was counterbalanced by a rank and savage instinct that once tempted him to seize and devour a woodchuck raw.

Vegetarians, on the other hand, believe that to eat animals, domesticated or not, is to violate a bond that unites humans with their creaturely relatives and guarantees a continuity between the wild and the civilized. Not for them St. Paul's discouraging remark to the Romans: "One man will have faith enough to eat all kinds of food, while a weaker man eats only vegetables." Anthropologists now may disagree about the dietary practices of the first humans, but early primitivist thought, as Boas points out, tended to favor vegetarianism. For Empedocles, vegetarianism was linked with the pacifism of the Golden Age; the poet Aratus believed that men did not forge swords and eat meat until the Bronze Age; Pythagoras believed that people in the Golden Age lived on fruit, berries, milk, and wild honey; the Roman satirist Juvenal thought that virtuous people could get along on acorns, though it is doubtful if he was himself that virtuous. The early Christian theologian Tertullian, whose asceticism suggests Diogenes in one direction and Thoreau in the other, believed that there was no meat-eating before the deluge, and early Christian thinkers generally agreed with Milton that there was no meat-eating in Paradise. In 17th- and 18th-century England, Thomas points out, there was a growing tendency to think

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of meat-eating as unnatural and a cause not only of bad breath but of intemperance and aggressiveness in human conduct.

In our own time the ethical argument against meat-eating has been advanced by the Australian philosopher Peter Singer in *Animal Liberation* and by the American philosopher Tom Regan in *The Case for Animal Rights*. From such writers, as might be expected, we get a highly principled vegetarianism, but this is no less the case with such notables as Percy Bysshe Shelley, George Bernard Shaw, and Adolf Hitler, though the latter two depended at times on injections derived from the entrails of animals. In fact, Hitler, like Wagner whose music he so admired and Shelley whose poetry he seems not to have been aware of, saw a connection between meat-eating and the decay of civilization. Thoreau was an off-and-on vegetarian, not liking to eat "our kindred animals." Even Lawrence was persuaded briefly but to no good effect to try an arsenic-vegetarian cure. What Himmler's Nordic supermen ate in the Tibetan mountains is anybody's guess, but at least they were safe from the civilized depredations of the Beaufort hunt.

Vegetarians, being an alienated and embattled minority in what many of them consider a cannibalistic environment, tend to agree with cynics ancient and modern that civilization as we know it is a deplorable, power-abusing state of affairs. This was pretty much the opinion of the meat-eating Jack London, whose *Call of the Wild* belongs as much with the literature of utopia as does the vegetarian Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*. Indeed, it is the combination of cynicism and utopianism that makes it so hard for many of us (as it is hard for Tarzan at the end of *Greystoke*) to decide in which direction we should go to get home at last. Perhaps this is why meat-eaters and vegetarians alike have been so prone to envisage home as an island—an island such as Diderot and his Enlightenment contemporaries imagined Tahiti to be, or as Margaret Mead much later imagined Samoa to be. On such an island it would be possible to sing a song of a younger, prelapsarian world, for nature would be uncorrupted by nurture and wild men and wild women would live in loving harmony with the unpolluted environment. In such a place, of course, fox hunting was no more likely to be permitted than in More's Utopia. Countless readers have found in Thoreau's *Walden* the moral equivalent of such an experience. For a long time Lawrence had an "island idea," his "Rananim," a place to which about twenty souls could escape "from this world of war and squalor" and find "some real decency," but by the time he came to write *Chatterley* he seems to have given up on the idea.

In the end, whether they are vegetarians or meat-eaters, those who are most sensitive to the call of the wild are most likely to respond to its promise of a symbiotic unity that will remove forever the burden of civilization with its dividedness, its sense of shame, and its confinement to the troubling ambiguities of metaphor. Perhaps civilization can be said to begin at the point where the difference between symbiotic and metaphoric states of unity can be recognized, for in the latter unity-in-diversity becomes possible along with privacy, self-conscious reflection, a sense of shame, and the discovery that we once may have been wild.

Our knowledge of the wild is of necessity limited since we must approach it, as Margaret Mead approached the primitive culture of Samoa, with our heads full of the structures of civilization—often long before we have learned that the critical instruments we use distort what we are measuring, if indeed they do not create it in response to our troubled, civilized need. One of the most effective instruments so far devised by civilization to define the wild is the tall tale, the kind of hyperbolic fiction employed in 19th-century America to define with a disclaiming humor the nature of frontier life. What we know about Diogenes, for instance, is a collection of grimly humorous tall tales, the most popular being the one that represents him going about with a lantern in broad daylight looking for an honest man—which if it tells us little about the historical Diogenes tells a great deal about those who value the story. *Tarzan of the Apes* and *The Call of the Wild* are tall tales told by writers who, if they have little of the humor that characterizes stories about frontier heroes like Davy Crockett and Mike Fink, have just as sure a sense of the fabulous. Burroughs admitted that the life of his Tarzan was wildly improbable, and there is good reason to believe that London knew he was telling his readers the kind of fairy story they (and he) liked to believe. Bernheimer's wild men and wild women are figures in humorless tall tales who need to be understood in relation to the extravagance and idealization that marks classical and medieval pastoral. And what is *Chatterley* if not the most humorless of tall tales?

The latter, in fact, was too tall a tale for Sylvia Beach, who said of it (after successfully resisting attempts to have her Shakespeare and Co. republish it in Paris) that it was all preaching. There is, God knows, preaching enough in the extravagant fictions that never seem to lose their capacity to thrill us (indeed, give some of us the only religious experiences we ever have) with their unfavorable comparisons between our own environment and nature in the raw, whatever that may be. Such fictions, of course, are more likely to entertain than to inspire corrective action, since the extremity of the terms in which they are conceived tends to discourage it. Once the story is over, all roads from Diogenes's wine jar and Tarzan's jungle redoubt promise only more places where the meat is raw and the plumbing nonexistent. Meanwhile, their tall tales are means we use to keep from learning that our problem is not so much that civilization lusts against the wild as that the wild in us lusts against civilization. Perhaps fox hunting serves the same purpose.

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Mistaken Identity

CAVEAT: REALISM, REAGAN, AND FOREIGN POLICY. By ALEXANDER M. HAIG, JR. *Macmillan. 367 pp. $17.95.*

Reviewed by NORMAN PODHORETZ

READING Alexander M. Haig, Jr.'s *Caveat* is a painful experience. This is not because it is a bad book. On the contrary, it is a surprisingly good one: surprising because no one listening to Mr. Haig speak without a prepared text would have thought him capable of handling the English language as smoothly and even elegantly as it is handled in *Caveat*. This suggests that Charles McCarry may have had a larger hand in the writing of *Caveat* than is implied by "the literary and editorial advice" for which Mr. Haig thanks him. Be that as it may, whoever wrote *Caveat* has produced a highly readable and consistently interesting account of Alexander Haig's eighteen months as Ronald Reagan's first Secretary of State.

Almost, though not quite, as surprising as the prose of *Caveat* is its measured tone. One's most vivid memories of Mr. Haig in office are of a man of strong passions which he was always struggling, and not always successfully, to control. Mr. Haig tried valiantly to speak in the bland and reassuring voice of the diplomat, but the fierce and combative character of the warrior kept showing through. In this he differed from George Marshall and Dwight Eisenhower, both of whom managed the transition from soldier to statesman much more easily than Mr. Haig could ever seem to do.

The fact is that he never struck one as entirely at home in the role of Secretary of State. Emotionally he was like a naturally untidy person whose clothes insist on looking sloppy in defiance of the most careful grooming and tailoring. In Mr. Haig the affectation of total self-control that is the stereotypical mark of the professsional diplomat always seemed just that—an affectation; one had the feeling, even when he smiled, that he was always on the point of losing his temper. So much was this so that rumors were circulated to the effect that the heart surgery he had undergone shortly before being appointed had worked a personality change, rendering him a little unstable.

Alluding to these rumors, Mr. Haig dismisses them. Since they were given their greatest currency by the agitated appearance he presented on television the day President Reagan was shot, he also takes the trouble to explain why he was sweating and breathless as he came into TV camera range. But his main strategy for laying these rumors to rest is the steady tone he adopts in telling his story. Not only is he now recollecting the past in tranquillity; he is casting a retroactively tranquil spell over a fiery and tumultuous experience. For example, instead of simply acknowledging how angry or upset he was at this or that instance of mistreatment at the hands of people who were working in various ways against him, he keeps telling us how amusing or diverting or curious he found such episodes to be. But he did not then, and I doubt that he does even now.

A third surprising feature of *Caveat* is its frankness. In a time when nothing is concealed, whether in private life or public, when all the formerly dirty little secrets are being uncovered, when all the "closets" are being emptied, when what used to be covert, whether in Nicaragua or the bedroom, is now exposed to the full glare of publicity—when, in short, the whole of existence seems to be regulated by one gigantic sunshine law—we have no reason to be surprised if the memoirs of public officials are less and less governed by the decorous inhibitions of the past. Nevertheless I for one am still—though probably not for much longer—at least a little surprised at how outspoken public officials are becoming. Mr. Haig, it is true, does not go nearly so far as Edward Koch in *Mayor*, but it is also true that he is very forthright in describing the power struggles in which he became involved with the White House staff and a few of his colleagues in the cabinet. Thus if *Caveat* is less rich in personal gossip than *Mayor*, it gives us a similarly titillating sense of eavesdropping on conversations to which we would once have been prevented from listening and the prurient thrill of peeping into scenes we would once have been forbidden to see.

ALL this should have made *Caveat* a pleasure to read, and to some extent it does. Why then should I have found it painful as well? The main reason is that it left me with a renewed and very vivid sense of how great are the obstacles that stand in the way of a foreign policy equal to the challenge of Soviet expansionism.

Mr. Haig, unlike, say, his predecessor in the Carter administration, Cyrus Vance, was nothing if not realistic about the Soviet threat when he assumed the office of Secretary of State. Mr. Vance thought that the Soviet Union was no longer interested in expanding its power and influence and that it was now united with us in a desire for peace and security. Mr. Haig had no such illusions. He recognized that "Our enemy, the Soviet Union"—*enemy*, not adversary or rival—had "been seduced by the weakness of the American will and extended itself far beyond the natural limits of its own apparent interest and influence." Far from being the status-quo power it had been assumed to have become by the Carter administration, then, the Soviets today

NORMAN PODHORETZ *is the editor of* COMMENTARY. *His review of Edward Koch's* Mayor *appeared in our May issue.*

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were more expansionist than they had been in the past: ". . . Soviet military power, transformed from a continental to a global phenomenon," Mr. Haig believed, was now being used "to *establish*, not merely preserve, Communist rule wherever the USSR decided to do it. We were witnessing the conjunction of Soviet ambition and a maturing Soviet global reach."

Mr. Haig minces no words about the response of the Carter administration to this development. He knew then, as he says now, that "President Carter chose not to resist this audacious assault upon American interests," and in a display of the frankness on which he prides himself, he speaks also of "the Carter experiment in obsequiousness" which had led our friends to fear that "we had in fact accommodated ourselves to the inevitable loss of the world to Moscow."

Clearly, Mr. Haig meant to reverse this course. But how? His answer is worth quoting at some length:

> The new President, in his first days, had to . . . act decisively and directly on the Soviet Union. In his campaign, he had spoken about "linkage," the concept that any improvement in relations between Moscow and Washington had to be linked to an improvement of Moscow's behavior in the world. Unswerving advocacy of a code of international behavior that insisted on peaceful change was a sound starting point. As the first order of business in foreign affairs, the President had to tell the Soviets that they must choose between better relations with the U.S. and the destructive adventures they had undertaken, especially since Vietnam, across the globe.

In other words, what Mr. Haig wanted to do was return to a policy of détente. Of course neither he himself nor anyone else in the Reagan administration would have used that word. By 1980 the whole idea of détente had fallen into such discredit that even some of the most fervent proponents of cordial relations with the Soviet Union shied away from the word itself. While there was still much disagreement over the extent to which the original concept of détente as formulated and implemented by the Nixon administration amounted to a euphemism for appeasement, it took a very sharp eye to detect any difference between appeasement and détente in the first three years of the Carter administration. Indeed, Carter's own notorious confession after the invasion of Afghanistan that he had previously been naive about the Soviet Union suggested that in his heart he himself had perceived no real difference between the two.

Mr. Haig, however—like his old mentors Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger—still believed that the original policy of détente had been sound and that it could have worked if not for the erosion of executive authority caused by Vietnam and Watergate. Now, with a strong President in the White House and a new mood in the country, the time was ripe for doing what the Nixon and Ford administrations had been prevented from doing and what the Carter administration never even wanted to do until it was too late.

A FORMER high official in the Nixon administration once told me that its version of détente could be symbolized by an iron fist in a velvet glove. If so, one might say that under Mr. Carter the iron fist had been removed and that what Mr. Haig wanted to do was put it back. This meant, as a first step, a military build-up to restore the balance of power, both because it was necessary in itself and because it was also a precondition for serious arms-control negotiations. At the same time, we would once again set about creating a structure of incentives and penalties which would induce the Soviet Union to act in accordance with "a code of international behavior that insisted on peaceful change." The corollary—spelled out explicitly in the Basic Principles of Détente agreed upon by the United States and the Soviet Union in 1972 and reaffirmed in somewhat less explicit terms by Mr. Haig—was that the two superpowers would restrain third parties from engaging in activities that might draw the superpowers themselves into dangerous confrontations.

Give or take a detail or two, and leaving aside the question of day-to-day tactics and bureaucratic maneuverings, this is the policy Mr. Haig urged upon Ronald Reagan throughout his eighteen months as Secretary of State. It is also—again, give or take a detail or two and leaving aside the question of how skillfully it was implemented—very nearly indistinguishable from the détente policy of the Nixon administraton. In fact, it is very nearly indistinguishable from the policy Mr. Nixon, in his recent book *Real Peace*, now calls "hard-headed détente." Here is how he defines it:

> Hard-headed détente is a combination of détente with deterrence. . . . Hard-headed détente must be based on a strength of arms and strength of will sufficient to blunt the threat of Soviet blackmail. This should be combined with a mixture of prospective rewards for good behavior and penalties for bad behavior that gives the Soviet Union a positive incentive to keep the peace rather than break it.

According to Mr. Nixon, this policy as he practiced it actually worked. Henry Kissinger, on the other hand, admits that in at least certain respects it failed, but he blames those failures almost entirely on Congress and the media. Mr. Haig says nothing one way or the other about the track record of the policy in the past, but it is clear from his devotion to it in the present that he too blames its failures, if any, not on its own misjudgments both of the Soviet Union and of American public opinion, but on the post-Vietnam political climate. The notion that Mr. Haig was or is a "superhawk," a believer in global confrontation or in the "militarization" of American foreign policy, was and is a case of mistaken identity.

THERE was no need to wait for *Caveat* in order to avoid this mistake. No one who was paying reasonably close attention to Mr. Haig's public statements and his behavior as Secretary of State

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could have failed to see in him a faithful disciple of the President under whom he had served a decade earlier. The real question was whether Mr. Haig did or did not speak for or reflect the views of the President under whom he was now serving.

The rumors circulating in conservative circles had it that there was a struggle within the Reagan administration for the President's soul between Mr. Haig and such hard-liners as Richard Allen (then the National Security Adviser), UN Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, and William Casey at the CIA. Mr. Haig confirms the rumors of a struggle, but in his account it did not involve the kind of ideological disagreements that were assumed by conservatives to be the cause. He has harsh words for his old opponents in the administration but rarely do they touch on questions of policy; and even when they do (as in the instance of Ambassador Kirkpatrick's alleged position on the Falklands war or Caspar Weinberger's animus against Israel), they never impinge on the central and overriding issue of how to deal with the Soviet threat. According to Mr. Haig, the struggles he got caught up in—naturally through no fault of his own—were not for the soul of the President but for power and turf. He was forced out (that is to say, fired) not because the President had mistaken him for a Reaganite and had then come to understand that he was a Nixonian, but because the members of Mr. Reagan's inner circle considered him a threat to their own power and position.

Today, looking at how the Reagan administration has conducted itself since Mr. Haig's departure, one can say without hesitation that his account of his difficulties in office is much closer to the truth than the old idea that they derived from ideological factors. The New Right passionately wanted to "get Haig," but once they got him, what did they get? "Let Reagan be Reagan," they said, but with Mr. Haig out of the way, the President's foreign policy changed so little (indeed, as Mr. Haig rightly says, his ideas have been more faithfully carried out since his departure than when he was in office) that a new culprit had to be found—and was, in the person of James Baker, the White House chief of staff. But it is safe to say that if Mr. Baker were to depart, taking the other leading suspect Michael Deaver with him for good measure, Mr. Reagan's course would still remain roughly what it has been from the beginning.

For Ronald Reagan himself, though to a much greater extent than Mr. Haig, has been a case of mistaken identity. By taking some of his statements at face value, both the President's warmest friends and his most virulent enemies imagined that they had found in him a champion of the old conservative dream of going beyond the containment of Communism to the "rollback" of Communist influence and power and the "liberation" of the Soviet em-

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pire. The truth, however, is that Mr. Reagan as President has never shown the slightest inclination to pursue such an ambitious strategy.

Certainly he means what he says when he speaks of the Soviet Union as an "evil empire," and I think he also genuinely believes that Communism is a passing aberration destined someday to disappear. But that consummation so devoutly to be wished he is evidently willing to leave to heaven. To the Oval Office, while he occupies it, he assigns a much more modest task, which is to get the United States back into the business of doing at least *something* to contain Soviet expansionism after a period when we stood by and helplessly watched the Soviets achieve overall military superiority and a new global reach extending into the Middle East, Africa, and especially Central America. As against those who wish to continue doing nothing (or actually to support and even sponsor the establishment of Communist regimes in Central America and other parts of the Third World on the theory that if we do so they will all turn out to be Titoist), Mr. Reagan's idea is to restore the military balance and simultaneously renegotiate the same kind of arrangement with the Soviets that Mr. Nixon thought he had achieved in 1972.

Thus, far from trying to exacerbate the Polish crisis by declaring Poland in default, Mr. Reagan actually helped the Soviets stabilize the situation there; nor has he done much to strengthen the forces in Afghanistan and Angola fighting to free themselves from Soviet imperial domination. As for the hard line he has taken with the Sandinistas and the guerrillas in El Salvador, it does not at all go beyond the bounds of "hard-headed détente." For as Mr. Nixon himself makes clear in *Real Peace*, keeping Soviet influence out of Central America is an essential element of a hard-headed détente, the obverse of our refraining from efforts to destabilize East Europe.

READING Mr. Haig's book, I found myself astonished anew that even a policy with such limited objectives should be so controversial, that an administration as prudent as Mr. Reagan's should be attacked as reckless, that a President so cautious in the use of force as Ronald Reagan (see Lebanon) should be called trigger-happy. There is no good reason why the policy Mr. Haig describes and defends—and which remains the policy of the Reagan administration—should not command the support of mainstream Democrats. It is, after all, a policy whose lineage can be traced directly back to Harry Truman, differing from containment mainly in its greater modesty and moderation; and in attacking it as though it were descended from Douglas MacArthur, the Democrats today sound more and more like Henry Wallace. That détente, even hard-headed détente, should now be considered the hard-line position is a reminder of how influential the forces of appeasement have become in shaping the terms of our public discourse, and how far we have traveled as a nation from the bipartisan consensus on containment we once enjoyed and that we still need if we are to cope even minimally with the Soviet threat. It is because Mr. Haig throws so intense, if indirect, a light on this sorry condition that his book is so painful to read.

Refugees?

FROM TIME IMMEMORIAL: THE ORIGINS OF THE ARAB-JEWISH CONFLICT OVER PALESTINE. By JOAN PETERS. *Harper & Row. 601 pp. $24.95.*

Reviewed by DANIEL PIPES

JOAN PETERS began this book planning to write about the Arabs who fled Palestine in 1948-49, when armies of the Arab states attempted to destroy the fledgling state of Israel. In the course of research on this subject, she came across a "seemingly casual" discrepancy between the standard definition of a refugee and the definition used for the Palestinian Arabs. In other cases, a refugee is someone forced to leave a permanent or habitual home. In this case, however, it is someone who had lived in Palestine for just two years before the flight that began in 1948.

This discrepancy made little impression on her at first, Miss Peters recounts. But as she continued, the anomaly of the Palestinians "began to nag and unravel" the outline of her book. Why a separate definition for the Palestinians? What was it about them that had to be incorporated in the official description of eligibility for refugee status? Reading historical materials about Palestine in the years before 1948, Miss Peters came across a statement by Winston Churchill that she says opened her eyes to the situation in Palestine. In 1939 Churchill challenged the common notion that Jewish immigration into Palestine had uprooted its Arab residents. To the contrary, according to him, "So far from being persecuted, the Arabs have crowded into the country and multiplied till their population has increased more than even all world Jewry could lift up the Jewish population."

Arabs crowded into Palestine? As Miss Peters pursued this angle she found a fund of obscure information that confirmed Churchill's observation. Drawing on census statistics and a great number of contemporary accounts, she pieced together the dimensions of Arab immigration into Palestine before 1948. Although others have noted this phenomenon, she is the first to document it, to attempt to quantify it, and to draw conclusions from it. Her historical detective work has produced startling results which should materially influence the future course of the debate about the Palestinian problem.

Before entering into the statistics and reports Miss Peters uses to put forward her argument, however, I should enter a word of caution about *From Time Immemorial*. The author is not a historian or someone practiced in writing on politics, and she tends to let her passions carry her away. As a result, the book suffers from chaotic

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DANIEL PIPES, *lecturer on history at Harvard University, contributed "The Media and the Middle East" to our June issue. His most recent book is* In the Path of God: Islam and Political Power.

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presentation and an excess of partisanship, faults which seriously mar its impact. But they do not diminish the importance of the facts presented. Despite its drawbacks, *From Time Immemorial* contains a wealth of information which is well worth the effort to uncover.

MAKING use of work done by Kemal Karpat in the Ottoman records, Miss Peters ascertains the non-Jewish population in 1893 of the area that would later form Palestine under the British Mandate. She then divides this area into three parts: one without Jewish settlement, one with light Jewish settlement, and one with heavy Jewish settlement. She compares the non-Jewish population of each of these parts in 1893 and 1947, on the eve of Israel's independence. In the area of no Jewish settlement, the non-Jewish population stood in 1893 at 337,200; in 1947 it was 730,000, a growth of 116 percent. In the area of light Jewish settlement, the non-Jewish population grew in the same period from 38,900 to 110,900 or 185 percent. Finally, in the area of heavy Jewish settlement, the non-Jewish population grew from 92,300 in 1893 to 462,000 in 1947—or 401 percent. From these figures Miss Peters concludes that "the Arab population appears to have increased in direct proportion to the Jewish presence."

The great variance in the figures usually gets obscured because the three regions are lumped together and counted as a single unit. Population in the whole area of Mandatory Palestine grew 178 percent in fifty-four years. This increase can be accounted for through natural reproduction alone; it therefore raises few questions. But 401 percent cannot be explained in this way, much less the vast difference in growth rates among the three divisions.

How, then, to account for the varying rates? By the movement of peoples. Although the Jews alone moved to Palestine for ideological reasons, they were not alone in emigrating there. Arabs joined them in large numbers, from the first *aliyah* in 1882 to the creation of Israel in 1948. "The Arabs were moving into the very areas where Jewish settlement had preceded them and was luring them." Arab immigration received much less attention because both the Turkish and British administrators (before and after 1917, respectively) took little interest in them. Under the latter, for instance, "there was not even a serious gauge for considering the incidence of Arab immigation into Palestine." The return of Zionists to the land of their ancestors was a topic of nearly universal fascination, both positive and negative. Arabs crossing newly-established and artificial boundaries caught no one's interest.

As a result, officials in Palestine counted only a small percentage of the Arab immigrants. British records for 1934 show only 1,734 non-Jews as legal immigrants and about 3,000 as illegals. Yet, according to a newspaper interview in August 1934 with the governor of the Hauran

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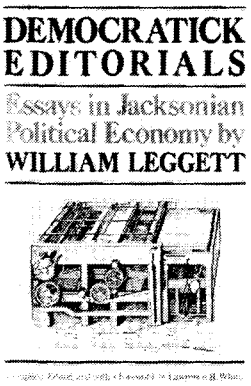

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district in Syria, "In the last few months from 30,000 to 36,000 Hauranese had entered Palestine and settled there." In 1947, British officials had counted only 37,000 Arabs as the aggregate of non-Jewish immigrants in Palestine since 1917—hardly more than had come from one district of Syria in less than one year alone.

Non-Jewish immigrants came from all parts of the Middle East, including Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Transjordan (as Jordan was once known), Saudi Arabia, the Yemens, Egypt, Sudan, and Libya. Thanks to British unconcern, Arab immigrants were generally left alone and allowed to settle in Mandatory Palestine. So many Arabs came, Miss Peters estimates, that "if all those Jews and all those Arabs who arrived in . . . Palestine between 1893 and 1948 had remained, and if they were forced to leave now, a dual exodus of at least equal proportion would in all probability take place. Palestine would be depopulated once again."

Some British administrators complained about the laxness toward Arab immigration, but to little avail. The author devotes sixteen pages to the memoranda sent in the latter part of 1937 by the British consul in Damascus, Colonel Gilbert MacKereth, in which he urges a more effective patrolling of Palestine's borders. MacKereth failed in this because British concern with immigration remained always focused on the Jews.

What took hundreds of thousands of Arabs to Palestine? Economic opportunity. The Zionists brought the skills and resources of Europe. Like other Europeans settling scarcely populated areas in recent times—in Australia, Southern Africa, or the American West—the Jews in Palestine initiated economic activities that created jobs and wealth on a level far beyond that of the indigenous peoples. In response, large numbers of Arabs moved toward the settlers to find employment.

The conventional picture has it that Jewish immigrants bought up Arab properties, forcing the former owners into unemployment. Miss Peters argues exactly the contrary, that the Jews created new opportunities which attracted emigrants from distant places. To the extent that there was unemployment among the Arabs, it was mostly among the recent arrivals.

This reversal of the usual interpretation implies a wholly different way of seeing the Arab position in Mandatory Palestine. As Winston Churchill observed, "It is very difficult to make a case out for the misery of the Arabs if at the same time their compatriots from adjoining states could not be kept from going in to share that misery." The data unearthed by Joan Peters indicate that Arabs benefited economically so much by the presence of Jewish settlers from Europe that they traveled hundreds of miles to get closer to them.

In turn, this explains why the definition of a refugee from Palestine in 1948 is a person who lived there for just two years: because many Arab residents in 1948 had immigrated so recently. The usual definition would have cut out a substantial portion of the persons who later claimed to be refugees from Palestine.

Thus, the "Palestinian problem" lacks firm grounding. Many of those who now consider themselves Palestinian refugees were either immigrants themselves before 1948 or the children of immigrants. This historical fact reduces their claim to the land of Israel; it also reinforces the point that the real problem in the Middle East has little to do with Palestinian-Arab rights.

Paint & Politics

HOW NEW YORK STOLE THE IDEA OF MODERN ART: ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM, FREEDOM, AND THE COLD WAR. By SERGE GUILBAUT. Translated by ARTHUR GOLDHAMMER. *University of Chicago Press. 276 pp. $22.50.*

Reviewed by LIONEL ABEL

LOOKING back at the art scene in New York City as shaped during the war years and early 50's, a critic might well find much to criticize in past descriptions of the Abstract Expressionist movement, both by those who championed and by those who opposed it; he might also raise questions about the motives of the artists involved, as of their champions and their detractors. And if such an inquiry were pursued with an informed sympathy and a readiness to cover a wide range of fact—as we find, for example, in T. J. Clark's essay "Clement Greenberg's Theory of Art" in the September 1982 issue of *Critical Inquiry*—the results might be clarifying. But Serge Guilbaut's review of the art movement during those years is hardly an inquiry; it is much more like a prosecutor's brief. The motives of those who championed the Abstract Expressionists are not scrutinized, or searched out, but "revealed" in all of what the author takes to be their political misguidedness. The actual works of the painters are not even once described, nor are there photographs of them to remind the reader that so much agitation and disagreement is about actual paintings. The artists are of course mentioned, but almost always in connection with some manifesto they had drawn up, never in connection with some painting one of them had actually taken the trouble to bring off. Barnett Newman, for example, is mentioned almost as frequently as Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning, though Newman, who later produced some remarkable canvases (among them the lovely *Who's Afraid of Red, Yellow & Blue*), was known during the critical years of the movement mainly for his formulation of the demands and resolves of artists with whom he was associated.

And there is worse. Serge Guilbaut's title is *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art*, and the subtitle is "Abstract Expressionism, Freedom, and the Cold War." Now the title is patently a fraud, for there is nothing in the text to suggest that anything whatever was *stolen*, or that Abstract Expressionism is in fact the *idea* of modern art. Some reviewers have seen the title as a yielding to commercialism. They have not reacted

LIONEL ABEL's *new memoir*, The Intellectual Follies, *will be published in the fall by Norton. Sections from the book have appeared in* COMMENTARY.

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sufficiently to the charge of theft —no small matter, that—a charge not made good by any argument in the text itself. And how does the commercialism in the title, if that is the real intent of it, go with a text which suggests that the city of New York was far too imbued with capitalist interests, with commercialism, if you please, to become the center of an art movement entitled to wrest leadership from whatever was still stirring in Paris?

Moreover, the author is often wrong in his restatements of what others have said. Writing on Meyer Schapiro's article, "The Nature of Abstract Art," in the *Marxist Quarterly* of 1937, Guilbaut says that this essay ". . . marks a conceptual and ideological shift in Schapiro's work. Whereas in 1936 Schapiro had argued in 'The Social Bases of Art' that the artist had a place in the revolutionary process, . . . by 1937 he was arguing . . . that the artist was cut off from all revolutionary hope." Now the descriptions of both of Schapiro's texts are false. He did not find a place for the artist in the revolutionary process in his earlier article, nor did he, in the *Marxist Quarterly* article, assert that the artist was cut off from all revolutionary hope. And it is not the case, as the author maintains, that Delmore Schwartz criticized Schapiro ". . . for attributing too much importance to aesthetics. . . ." Quite to the contrary, Schwartz criticized Schapiro for treating sociologically the abstract art which Schapiro's title suggested would deal with its "nature." In fact, much of Schapiro's originality lay in his departures, often inspired, from the aesthetic. And what can it mean to say that Schapiro's article was "the first sign of a breach in the Communist wall that would later be widened (by Breton and Trotsky in 1938, Greenberg in 1939, and Motherwell in 1944)"? The judgments here are inaccurate; the assumptions behind them are utterly questionable.

THE AUTHOR does not distinguish between the politics of the art world and the politics of the U.S., as pursued by its executives and diplomats. His thesis is that Abstract Expressionism was a tool of the American government in the cold war which, according to him, was declared by Washington, not by Moscow. (This is of course the thesis of the revisionist historians, which has had to be rejected by historians interested in facts. Among these facts are Stalin's expulsion of Earl Browder from the Communist party for favoring moderation toward the U.S. and the aggressiveness of Soviet foreign policy from 1945 on.) But fact is of such slight interest to the author that he can allow himself to accuse Winston Churchill of flinging down "an iron curtain" across Europe in the very speech in which Churchill asked the Soviets to lift the iron curtain they themselves had flung down. He says of the Marshall Plan that it "permanently alienated the Soviet Union from the United States." To ascribe the permanent alienation of the Soviet Union from the United States to the Marshall Plan is to regard as unworthy of attention any of the political actions, or rationalization of such actions, by the Soviet leaders since the war.

In any case, world politics is not art politics. However one explains the purposes of Truman or Acheson or Churchill, or Stalin for that matter, what can such purposes have had to do with the paintings produced by Robert Motherwell, Arshile Gorky, Willem de Kooning, and Jackson Pollock, or with the championship of such paintings by the critics Harold Rosenberg and Clement Greenberg? As Guilbaut sees the matter, the *success* of Abstract Expressionism was helpful to American policy-makers in Washington. If American painters could rule the world of art, then what objection could there be to letting American policy-makers dominate the states of Western Europe?

Certainly the success of Abstract Expressionism was no hindrance to

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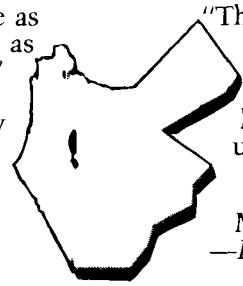

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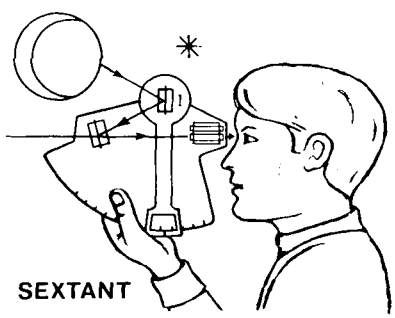

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Truman, Acheson, Eisenhower, or Dulles, but I see no way in which it can be said to have been a help in carrying out a foreign policy which was often improvised, unstable, and at times incoherent. But even supposing the political line of Washington was clearer than I think it to have been, how could it have been helped by the New York painters, whatever the worth of their productions? As I remember, after the defeat of France in 1940, Archibald MacLeish wrote accusingly of the "Irresponsibles," the avant-garde writers of France, Proust among them, charging that they had hurt France in the war against Hitler. This accusation is as worthless as the counter-accusation of Serge Guilbaut that the American Abstract Expressionists, aided by Messrs. Greenberg and Rosenberg, helped American Presidents from Truman to Kennedy carry on their cold war against Soviet Communism.

WHATEVER may be said to have influenced the New York City painters to take the abstract turn they made decisive in the 1940's must surely be distinguished from whatever it was that made for the success of Abstract Expressionism. It is characteristic of Serge Guilbaut's crude thinking that he tries to merge the distinctly different processes of individual creation and public success. For him the cause of the abstract turn taken by *the painters is to be found in their* negative politics, which is to say their depoliticization (furthered by Greenberg and Schapiro); the cause he gives for the success of Abstract Expressionism is the rising nationalism of the country, of the nation's ideological leaders like, for example, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., and the anti-Soviet bias of our art critics after the war.

On both matters, the cause of the movement—about which, in the nature of the case, one cannot be too certain (there has to be a certain mystery in the emergence of any really good art)—and the success of the movement, the author is a historian without a feeling for facts, a judge without any gift for judgment.

As to the first matter: I think one important fact was the increased confidence of the American painters (in New York City, at any rate) when they had direct contact with the European, and most especially the French, painters they had admired for years, and who were now at work alongside them in the very same studios. De Kooning told me this in 1948 when I was about to go to Paris. He showed me a canvas he had just completed—I think it one of the very best of his paintings. It was, as I recall, neither ambiguously abstract nor ambiguously figurative: the one clear object in it was an iron hoop (of the kind, when we were kids, we used to direct down the sidewalk with a stick) against a colored background. I cannot say just what it was that gave the canvas its intensity and affirmativeness; it was yea-saying in spirit and not merely because it did not say "No" either to the abstract or to the figurative. I remember saying at once, "This painting is just wonderful, you've made a breakthrough of some kind." "I really have," he said, and of course I wanted to know how this had come about. Here is de Kooning's account: "I was painting in this studio right next to Léger and Hélion, whom I had always thought were better painters than I. Then one day it struck me that they were not, and that I was just as interesting. . . ." He had made the painting I admired *to celebrate the discovery of his* own worth.

The new event in what occurred during the war years was this: the American painters of New York City came to have a confidence they had never felt before as they measured themselves against the European painters whose powers distance and publicity had magnified. This was true only of the painters in New York City, for it was to this city that the European painters came, and some of the very best were here: Mondrian, Miró, Chagall, Masson, Matta, Tanguy, Max Ernst, Léger, Hélion, Duchamps. In all the talk since that time about the new American art which developed in New York City and took the play away from Paris —talk which Serge Guilbaut does

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absolutely nothing to refine—there should be some recognition of the fact that the outstanding Parisian painters spent the years of the war in New York, and the ones who benefited artistically from acquaintance with them were the American painters in the city.

LET ME describe a most revealing event of that period. The year, if I remember rightly, was 1944, and the Julien Levy Gallery was showing Tanguy's exquisite paintings, of lost bones on forlorn beaches. Many painters came to the opening, and Max Ernst, who was then married to Peggy Guggenheim, invited everyone at the opening to their apartment on Beekman Place. Among those who came were some American painters and art critics, the Surrealists, and Mondrian.

At the party which followed at the Beekman Place apartment, there was much praise for Tanguy, and at one point the painter, who had been drinking, turned to Mondrian, a slenderly built man, modest of demeanor and thoroughly sober in a crowd that was trying to get drunk. Tanguy said: "I'm most interested in your opinion of my show." Mondrian answered immediately, and what he said sent a shock through everyone, including his own followers. What Mondrian said was: "Your paintings are excellent in most respects. I have only one fault to find with them. They are too abstract." And then Mondrian went on to deny that his own paintings could properly be called abstract. They were not copies of existing objects, they were themselves objects, and objects never before seen in more material guise than he himself had granted them. This is all I now recall of what he said, but I still retain the shock to me and to others of Mondrian's remark on that occasion. Here was indeed a Parisian event and of historic interest; it took place in New York City.

There was yet another factor which may be said to have stimulated the new art movement in New York. Among all of the painters at that time, the Europeans as well as the Americans, this question was regularly raised: how can one make a revolution after Picasso? In general, the view held was that one could not make any such revolution, but also that one should try to do so. And I think the one painter who answered affirmatively, "I can," was Jackson Pollock. His way of doing this was typically American. He refused to draw on anything in the past tradition of painting, and this was a step more radical than either Gorky or de Kooning was prepared to take at the time. Now it was Pollock, de Kooning told me, who opened the door to the other American painters.

SUCH was the idea—environment, if I can be allowed that term—of the Abstract Expressionist movement, and in all this I see nothing political. What caused the success of the movement had little to do with politics either. The abstract painters were simply better and more interesting artists than those belonging to other schools, and people who cared about painting saw the value of their work. And the American Abstract Expressionists were not the only abstract painters who won the approval of the critics. Such abstract artists as the German Wols, who did his work in Paris after the war, and the Canadian painter Riopelle, were also sought after by collectors, and neither of them furthered the political purposes of the American government. Collectors purchased their works all the same.

Finally, the American painters were not depoliticized during the 40's and 50's. During the war, they were for victory over Hitler, and during the 1952 presidential race, the members of the Eighth Street Art Club, whose heroes were Pollock and de Kooning, rallied to the support of Stevenson against Eisenhower. And this was at a time when Irving Howe, whom I have never known to be depoliticized, was preaching that there was not a dime's worth of political difference between the two candidates. Now this is perhaps beside the point. All I want to stress here is that at the time when Abstract Expressionism was being created, the painters responsible for its creation

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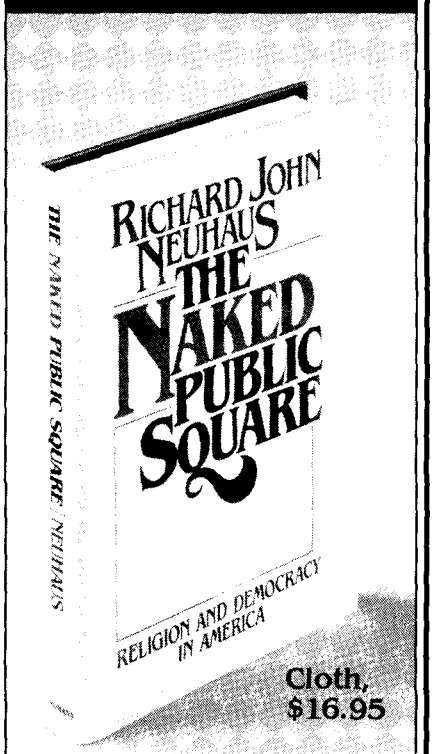
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did not think of themselves as alienated from this country or its politics, even as they went about creating what is surely a nonpolitical art.

In the Ranks of Honor

WINSTON S. CHURCHILL: FINEST HOUR, 1939–1941. By MARTIN GILBERT. *Houghton-Mifflin. 1,274 pp. $40.00.*

Reviewed by SPENCER WARREN

ON NOVEMBER 30, 1934, Winston Churchill celebrated his sixtieth birthday. Cut off from power, his warnings about the Nazi danger ignored, his judgment doubted, and his motives impugned, Churchill had reason to be pessimistic about his political future, his career appeared to be largely behind him, and he assumed he was entering the last decade of his life. But his friends continued to encourage him, one writing, "In spite of what I hear you say, you have yet a great life before you."

Churchill's then thirty-five-year career, which had seen triumphs and a debacle that had almost ruined him, was, as his friend presciently wrote, merely the prelude to the most inspiring chapter in the history of political leadership. That story has never been told with anything approaching the thoroughness and detail of Martin Gilbert's *Finest Hour, 1939–1941*. In this, the sixth volume of the authorized biography, the monumental work reaches its apogee.

Gilbert, whose prodigious labors have established him as a leading historian, is an Oxford don who counts a number of works on Jewish history among his scholarly achievements. He replaced Churchill's son Randolph as the official biographer when the latter died after completing the first two volumes. Gilbert has remained true to Randolph's motto for the work, "He shall be his own biographer." The historian remains in the background, allowing the hero to stand forth and tell the story in his own words.

And so our hero does, across 1,274 pages, in letters, memoranda, minutes, and speeches. We accompany Churchill through two years and four months of mortal peril, from September 3, 1939, the day Britain went to war with Hitler, and the day Churchill ended his ten years in the wilderness by joining the government as First Lord of the Admiralty, to December 12, 1941, five days after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, which, by bringing the United States into the war, gave Churchill the assurance of Britain's ultimate victory. Gilbert relates Churchill's views of the great events and decisions, and the observations of Churchill's part in them by those around him, often from day to day and hour to hour. The author has had first use of Churchill's private papers and of certain diaries and letters of co-workers, which he has supplemented with interviews. Combining these with the mountain of memoirs, Cabinet papers, and other sources previously available, of which he has encyclopedic knowledge, Gilbert gives us a portrait of the war leader we have never had before.

MORE than a work of political biography, *Finest Hour* is the story of a noble human spirit—of his courage, fire, ceaseless energy, and humanity. Probably not even those who lived through the year from the fall of France to the German invasion of Russia, a year when, in Churchill's words, Britain "stood alone and the whole world wondered," can comprehend the burden that weighed on his shoulders.

Gilbert, in focusing on Churchill's personal story, allows us to see the doubts and fears that lay behind the indomitable face. Driving back from Buckingham Palace after having been made Prime Minister by the King, on May 10, 1940, Churchill was accompanied by his detective. As Churchill got out of the car, the detective commented how great his task was. Churchill answered, "God alone knows how great it is. I hope that it is not too late. I am very much afraid that it is. We can only do our best." Tears were in his eyes. During the summer of 1940, when Britain faced the daily danger of invasion, Churchill later told Anthony Eden, "I awoke with dread in my heart."

Churchill's profound faith in himself and in his country gave him a strength few men could have summoned for the ordeal. His belief in his right to supreme power had been maintained across four decades, through defeats and frustrations that would have buried the hope of most men. Now, at the age of sixty-five, at the supreme moment in his country's history, the reins of power were finally his. Gilbert quotes from an extraordinary letter Churchill wrote to his wife in 1916 from the trenches in France, where he had gone to serve after the debacle at Gallipoli in 1915 seemed to have laid his career in ruins at the age of forty. Having narrowly averted death in a German shelling, he wrote: "20 yards more to the left & no more tangles to unravel, no more hatreds & injustices to encounter: joy of all my foes, . . . a good ending to a chequered life, a final gift—unvalued—to an ungrateful country —*an impoverishment of the war-making power of Britain which no one would ever know or measure or mourn*" (Gilbert's emphasis).

His personal confidence enabled Churchill to look beyond the awesome dominance of Nazi power, sitting astride all Europe, and to keep his eyes firmly fixed on the ultimate victory. "Wars," he said, "are won by superior will power." On June 1, 1940, at the end of the evacuation from Dunkirk, the director of the National Gallery, Kenneth Clark, asked Churchill about sending the gallery's paintings to Canada for safekeeping. "No," Churchill answered, "bury them in caves and cellars. None must go. We are going to beat them." On July 14, 1940, three weeks after the French surrender had left Britain alone in the war, its shattered army's equipment lying in the fields and on the beaches of France, Churchill gave a radio address to the nation in which he spoke of the expected invasion: "We await undismayed the impending assault. Perhaps it will come tonight. Perhaps it will come next week. Per-

SPENCER WARREN, *a lawyer with a degree in international affairs, was until recently on the Republican staff in the House of Representatives.*

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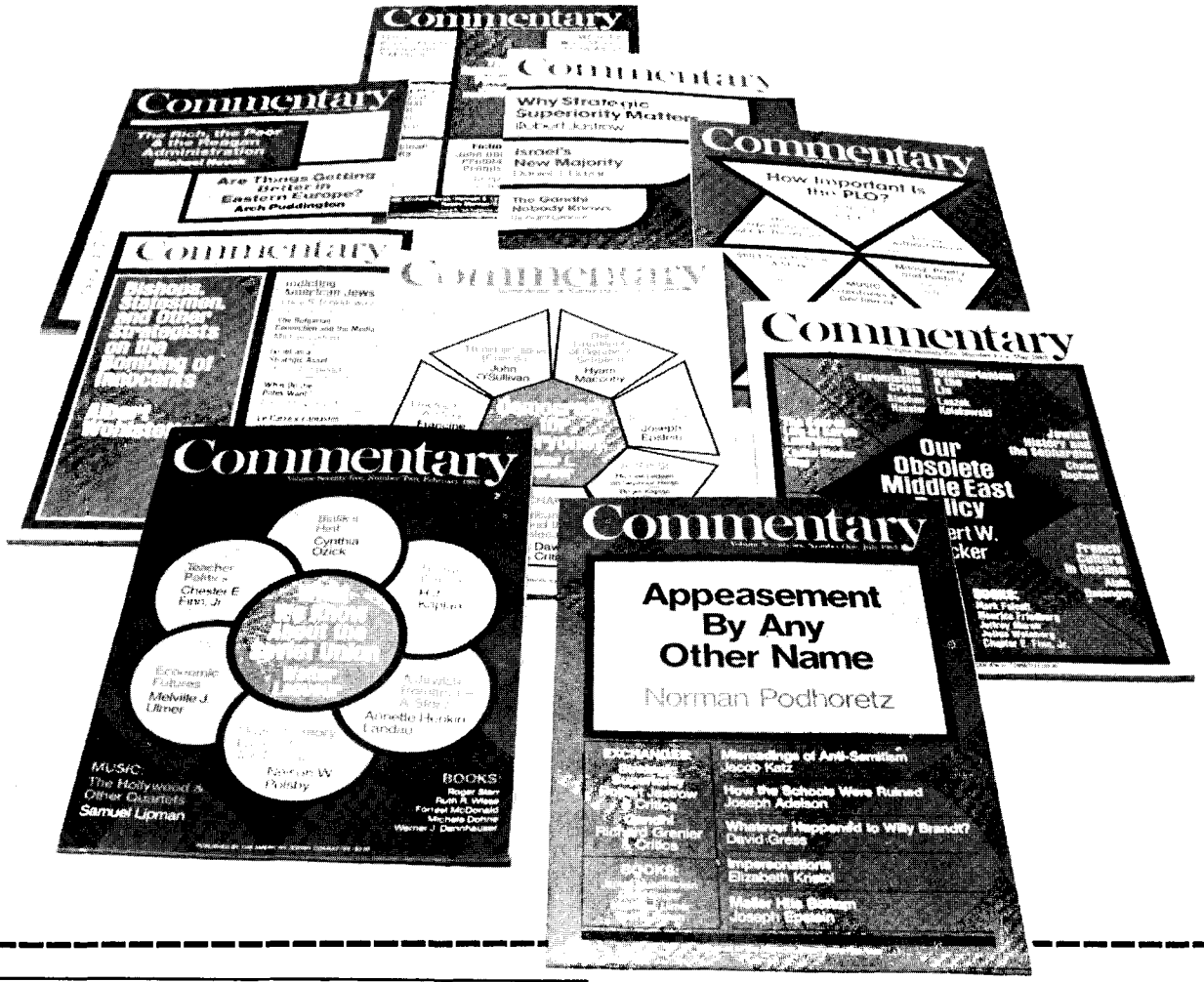

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haps it will never come. . . . But be the ordeal sharp or long, or both, we shall seek no terms, we shall tolerate no parley; we may show mercy—we shall ask for none." After hearing the speech, Harold Nicolson wrote to his wife, "But really he has got guts that man."

THE spring of 1941 was one of the bleakest periods of the war. Germany was invading the Balkans and its threat to the Middle East was growing. Britain's lifeline to vital American supplies was imperiled in the Battle of the Atlantic. But once the flow of supplies was assured, Churchill told the House of Commons, then however far Hitler might go, "or whatever new millions or scores of millions he may lap in misery, he may be sure that, armed with the sword of retributive justice, we shall be on his track."

There never has been a leader more infused with the spirit of the offensive. In the dark days of 1940, Churchill directed that priority be given to production of "craft for landing operations." He detested "the intolerable shackles of the defensive." He urged plans for the incineration of Germany's forests. He bombarded General Wavell, and his successor in 1941 as commander-in-chief in the Middle East, General Auchinleck, with messages to attack the German and Italian forces in Libya, the only land theater where Britain could take the offensive.

Nothing could escape Churchill's notice. All direction of the war emanated from his office, or his bedroom, where he worked mornings. In work days that could stretch beyond midnight, his glare might be fixed on the number of decorations going to the Merchant Navy (too few—bad for morale); on creating a committee to push the production of small inventions; or on the need to reduce to an absolute minimum the number of people with access to intelligence. A subject which frequently occupied Churchill was war production: its rate, technical developments, manpower, training. One of his private secretaries wrote that now that Churchill had the power he had never had before, he "was going to make sure that there were no disasters due to lack of zeal or direction in the back rooms." Churchill may often have been meddlesome, but there can be no doubt that, by force of the will power in which he so strongly believed, he was able to impart great energy to the war effort. Every bureaucrat knew he labored under Churchill's eye.

WHAT comes through perhaps most movingly in the biography is Churchill's intense humanity. Despite all the cares that occupied him, he often was quite generous and thoughtful. (Understandably, he could also be rude and overbearing toward subordinates, a quality less discussed by Gilbert.) An outstanding example is Churchill's conduct toward Neville Chamberlain after succeeding him as Prime Minister. Chamberlain, who had bitterly excluded Churchill from the government before the war, was ill with cancer. In what were to be his final months, he had to bear witness to the devastating consequences of his prewar policies. One day during the Battle of Britain, Churchill instructed John Colville, a member of his private secretariat, to telephone Chamberlain with the news that over a hundred German aircraft had been shot down. Colville wrote in his diary (one of Gilbert's major new sources) that Chamberlain was "overcome with joy" at Churchill's thinking of him. Colville added, "It is typical of Winston to do a small thing like this which could give such pleasure." Chamberlain died on November 9, 1940. Churchill gave one of his most eloquent speeches in tribute, and cried at the funeral.

Churchill's personal warmth was also demonstrated in his conduct toward younger people. Averell Harriman's daughter, Kathleen, wrote to her sister after first meeting Churchill, "I'd expected an overpowering, rather terrifying man. He's quite the opposite: very gracious, has a wonderful smile and isn't at all hard to talk to." Colville once recalled, "He was always very good with young men. He always treated them as if they were frightfully important and contemporaries."

Churchill's compassion was manifested in countless attentions to the suffering of the mass of the people. At the height of the Blitz, he sent a memo to the Home Secretary: "How are you getting on with the comfort of the shelters in the winter—flooring, drainage, and the like? . . . I attach the greatest importance to gramophones and wireless in the shelters. How is that going forward?"

A deeply emotional man, Churchill at times was reduced to tears on seeing the plight of victims of the bombing. In April 1941, he toured Bristol, which had been badly damaged in a raid the night before. At a rest center, a poor elderly woman was sobbing until he entered, when she began shouting, "Hooray, hooray!" As his train pulled out of the station, leaving the cheering crowds behind, Churchill hid his face with a newspaper. His eyes were filled with tears, as he said, in a voice choking with emotion, "They have such confidence. It is a grave responsibility."

Churchill's generosity was displayed in his attitude toward Germany. Even when the German threat to Britain was at its greatest, he spoke of the need for a magnanimous peace after what he was sure would be Britain's final victory. Only the Nazis, he once commented, "would be made to suffer for their misdeeds." His hatred of the "Huns," as he called the Germans in his (usual) fighting mood, was only "professional."

In his spacious heart, as his longtime friend Violet Bonham Carter wrote, Churchill combined toughness and tenderness, romantic perspective and realistic judgment, aristocratic temper and democratic passion, veneration for tradition and a taste for the unconventional.

TODAY, many politicians would be forlorn without the advisers and media consultants they employ to persuade us of their great ability. Manipulating imagery via television, they advertise, rather than demonstrate, their qualities. Of those who attain office, not enough have the character to give truth to the image. Many play at the levers of power; if asked in which direction they should go, they would not know.

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Winston Churchill knew his course. It was the one he eloquently described in his eulogy of Chamberlain:

> The only guide to a man is his conscience; the only shield to his memory is the rectitude and sincerity of his actions. It is very imprudent to walk through life without this shield, because we are so often mocked by the failure of our hopes, and the upsetting of our calculations; but with this shield, however the fates may play, we march always in the ranks of honor.

The fates played against Churchill for many years. His conscience and uncompromising character kept him from power for a long time. Yet once power and responsibility were in his hands, his fertile genius, under the fierce pressure of events, flowered as never before.

To cite a last example: on August 16, 1940, as the air battle over Britain intensified, Churchill, accompanied by his chief of staff, General Ismay, went to the Operations Room of No. 11 Group, Fighter Command. At one point that afternoon, every squadron in the Group was engaged. None was left in reserve, and the map table showed new waves of enemy aircraft crossing the Channel. As they left by car in the evening, the fighting having subsided, Churchill's first words to Ismay were, "Don't speak to me; I have never been so moved." After about five minutes, he leaned forward and said, "Never in the field of human conflict has so much been owed by so many to so few."

By his judicious, painstaking accumulation and ordering of the daily details of Churchill's "finest hour," Gilbert has performed a crucial task. For as the political philosopher Leo Strauss told his students, on learning of the death of Churchill in January 1965:

> We have no higher duty, and no more pressing duty, than to remind ourselves . . . of political greatness, human greatness, of the peaks of human excellence. For we are supposed to train ourselves . . . in seeing things as they are, and this means above all in seeing their greatness and their misery, their excellence and their vileness, their nobility and their triumphs, and therefore never to mistake mediocrity, however brilliant, for true greatness.

Getting Things Wrong

AN AMERICAN PROCESSION. By ALFRED KAZIN. *Knopf. 408 pp. $18.95.*

Reviewed by KENNETH S. LYNN

THE major key to his native city, said Henry James, was the monstrous labyrinth stretching from Canal Street to the Battery, the "down-town" world of business and finance, but as he acknowledged in the preface to the New York Edition of *Daisy Miller, Pandora, The Patagonia, and Other Tales*, the task of exploring lower Manhattan literarily was one for which he was in the last degree unprepared and uneducated. Although the "up-town" world of the music masters, French pastry cooks, ladies, and children lacked a serious male interest, James settled for it as a writer because the territory was familiar to him. "What it came down to was that up-town would do for me simply what up-town could."

The *Daisy Miller* preface is famous, not only because it is as poignant a confession as James ever made about the limitations of his artistic powers, but because it calls attention to American fiction's historic neglect of business, politics, and the professions. Not surprisingly, Alfred Kazin makes reference to the preface in his new study of the major American writers from 1830 to 1930. Nor is it surprising that Kazin makes a botch of the reference. "If he [James] worried that his experience even of New York life was 'downtown' with the 'pastry cooks,' never uptown in the business world,

KENNETH S. LYNN, *who teaches history at Johns Hopkins, is the author of* The Air-Line to Seattle, *among other books.*

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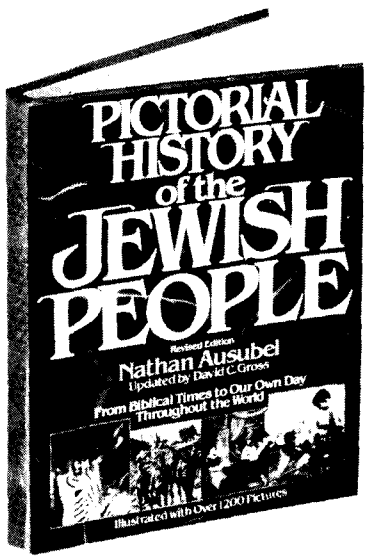
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it was because he wanted to succeed in a 'big' American way." Kazin may be a self-confessed "walker in the city" and "New York Jew," but he clearly could use a street guide to the whereabouts of Wall Street. As for his explanation of why James was worried about his insufficient knowledge of New York, what can one say other than that it is grossly reductive?

Kazin's penchant for getting things wrong goes back a long way. *On Native Grounds* (1942), a study of modern American prose literature from 1890 to 1940, contained many wonderfully fresh assessments. Yet the haste with which it was written led the incredibly young author—Kazin was only twenty-seven in 1942—to make all sorts of mistakes; one thinks, for instance, of his description of the "mountainous" section of Michigan (actual elevation: one thousand feet above sea level) where Hemingway spent his summers as a boy. *An American Procession* is a slightly shorter work than *On Native Grounds*, but its scope is far more ambitious. Not only does Kazin cover twice as long a time span as in the earlier book, but he takes up, one after the other, eighteen imaginative writers of very considerable complexity, from Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Herman Melville to T.S. Eliot, William Faulkner, and Ernest Hemingway, plus a philosopher, William James, and a politician Abraham Lincoln, neither of whom is easy to know, and makes glancing remarks about a number of figures from other walks of life, such as the landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmsted. In these circumstances, Kazin's proneness to error has become much more pronounced than ever before.

TIME and again, Kazin gives evidence of not having bothered to reread the books he is talking about, of not having kept abreast of the steadily accumulating biographical literature about their authors, of having made only a lick-and-a-promise effort to absorb the social, cultural, and intellectual historiography on which his sort of literary analysis has to be based if it is to be any good, of not having even troubled to consult reference works. T.S. Eliot saluted James Joyce's *Ulysses*, says Kazin, in April 1921, and he duly quotes a couple of sentences from the review. Alas, *Ulysses* wasn't published until February 1922, and Eliot's review appeared in the *Dial* in November 1923. The frightening figure of Injun Joe having somehow slipped his mind, Kazin argues that "in *Tom Sawyer* children and adults lived in parallel worlds without menacing each other." In Hemingway's "Big Two-Hearted River," the feckless critic continues, "the suffering mind of the war veteran Nick Adams seeks an accustomed sense of familiarity from the stream he fished before the war." Not only is the subject of war never mentioned in the story, but there is no indication that Nick has previously fished this stream; indeed, the fact that he is carrying a map suggests that he is as unfamiliar with the region as Hemingway was with the area around the Big Fox and Little Fox Rivers when he first visited it in the summer of 1919 and had the experiences on which the story is based. Apropos of Henry James's international-theme novel, *The Portrait of a Lady*, Kazin remarks that "Isabel is vaguely unsettled by the sight of Madame Merle standing while Gilbert is all too comfortably seated. She has no reason to suspect that they are anything but 'friends.' Between friends, this would have been a breach of manners in Boston. In Boston the sight would not have weighed so heavily on our heroine's mind." That the final sentence does not follow logically from the one before it is somewhat unfortunate, but what is far more unfortunate is Kazin's apparent belief that Isabel grew up in Boston, even though the memorable third chapter of the novel is devoted to her girlhood in Albany, New York.

Kazin's mistakes about William Dean Howells begin with his misinforming us about the year of Howells's birth. He then goes on to say that Howells always managed to "retain the benevolence of the Brahmins," despite the well-known estimate by Hamlin Garland that by the mid-1880's literary Boston was divided into three parts, "those who liked [Howells] and read him; those who read him and hated him; and those who just plain hated him." Frederick Law Olmsted, according to Kazin, was "the creator of the first public parks in America" and "the most practical of democratic visionaries." Both statements betray an impressive ignorance of the history of American landscape architecture, the first because it overlooks the efforts of Andrew Jackson Downing to turn the Mall in Washington, D.C. into "the first real park in America," as well as the campaign by Walt Whitman and others to establish Fort Greene Park in Brooklyn, and the second because it takes no cognizance either of the elitist disdain for the tastes of the common man that Olmsted and Vaux built into their plans for Central Park, or of Olmsted's turn-of-the-century despair about American life, for reasons that can only be described as racist. Returning once again to the subject of Hemingway, Kazin declares, "Hemingway knew that he owed everything to Cézanne, Gertrude Stein—and *Huckleberry Finn*." But Hemingway never came close to saying any such thing and he would have been crazy if he had, nor did he "irritate Dos Passos into conservatism," as Kazin insists at another point.

A LACK of professional self-discipline is also reflected in Kazin's prose style. *An American Procession* is a very sloppily written book. At times, its self-indulgent sentences are so awkwardly constructed that it is all but impossible to decipher their meaning. "This now legendary sense of self in America," Kazin writes in his preface, "is a principal character in my narrative, along with the hopes of a 'free man's worship' that came with it, before the aggressive and ever more concentrated forces assimilated the sense of self into capitalism as a theology." Does Kazin mean to say that the sense of self ceases to be a principal character in his book at the historical point at which it

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was assimilated into a capitalist theology? No, that can't be the case, for as late as page 389 he is still talking about the "precious sense of self that was one's whole life and every resource," and he leaves no doubt that the self-consciousness of such writers as F. Scott Fitzgerald and Hemingway had nothing whatsoever to do with a capitalist theology, whatever that is, or with "aggressive and ever more concentrated forces," whatever they may be.

Equally baffling is Kazin's assertion that "Even as he approached eighty [Henry] Adams had a special grasp of the old century's struggles among the European powers, a grasp that after he took us into the war those struggles led to, Adams's fellow historian Woodrow Wilson was the last to admit." A century can't struggle, of course, but that is the least of this sentence's problems. If we pay heed to the grammar, then we can only conclude that Kazin is accusing Woodrow Wilson of being the last (the last *what?*) to admit that Henry Adams had a special grasp of the struggles among the powers in 19th-century Europe. Wilson, however, never commented on Adams's grasp of those struggles, so perhaps Kazin is ungrammatically—and quite incoherently—contending that after he took us into the war Wilson was the last something or other to admit something or other having to do with Adams's understanding of international politics. As to what Adams's understanding consisted of, Kazin equates it with Randolph Bourne's aphorism, "War is the health of the state." Yet if Adams in effect agreed with Bourne, then why did Wilson's decision to ask Congress for a declaration of war against Germany give the old pessimist so much pleasure and raise his hopes about the future? "To my bewilderment," Adams explained to his friend Charles Gaskell, "I find the great object of my life thus accomplished in the building up of the great community of Atlantic Powers which I hope will make a precedent that can never be forgotten. . . . Strange it is that we should have done it by means of inducing those blockheads of Germans to kick us into it. I think that I can now contemplate the total ruin of our old world with more philosophy than I ever thought possible." Syntactically, some of Kazin's sentences may be too complicated, but their ideas are simplistic.

A NUMBER of the chapters in *An American Procession* were developed, Kazin says, out of reviews, essays, and introductions that he has written over the years. This piecemeal method of composition is evident in a certain repetitiousness in the book—we are told three times, for example, that Dreiser's mother was raised as a Mennonite—and in the disparate nature of its analyses. Unlike V. L. Parrington's *Main Currents in American Thought*, *An American Procession* has no grand conceptual scheme. If there is anything that holds the book together, it is the author's intense emotions—his vision of the 20th century as an endless chain of horrors, his hatred of capitalism, his contempt for American society. Thus, when he suggests that one reason for Thoreau's untimely death, during the Civil War, may have been "his inability to reconcile his romantic genius with American power," and goes on to make similar allegations about what the Civil War did to Hawthorne and Walt Whitman, he is not saying something that anyone with a respect for evidence could take seriously; rather, he is implying that from Abraham Lincoln to Ronald Reagan, a war-loving America has been killing sensitive writers. Similarly, in characterizing Hemingway's home town, Oak Park, Illinois, as a "suffocatingly proper suburb," he is not making a balanced historical judgment about the community in which Frank Lloyd Wright elected to live and work for twenty years, he is simply expressing an a-priori conviction that American suburbs, every last one of them, are enemies of the human spirit.

James Fenimore Cooper, Washington Irving, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Willa Cather, Robert Frost, and William Carlos Williams are among the writers who have not been allowed to march in Kazin's parade, and Howells is briefly examined only in order to be dismissed. Any writer, in other words, who would threaten Kazin's notion that sensitive Americans are all in flight from their country has either been barred from consideration or derided. Henry Adams, on the other hand, not only heads the parade but reappears in it time and again, so that Kazin may echo his nay-saying.

Yet finally even *The Education of Henry Adams* (1918) is not sufficiently negative to suit Kazin. "Long before he wrote the last sentence of the *Education*," Kazin says, "Adams knew that if he and his like returned to the 20th century they would not 'find a world that sensitive and timid natures could regard without a shudder.'" But the last sentence of the *Education* does hold out precisely the hope that Adams and his friends would find such a world: "Perhaps someday—say 1938, their centenary—they might be allowed to return together for a holiday, to see the mistakes of their own lives made clear in the light of the mistakes of their successors; and perhaps then, for the first time since man began his education among the carnivores, they would find a world that sensitive and timid natures could regard without a shudder." In misrepresenting his own hero's true sentiments, Kazin reveals once again that *An American Procession* is not so much a book about America's literary achievements as it is Alfred Kazin's sour spiritual testament.

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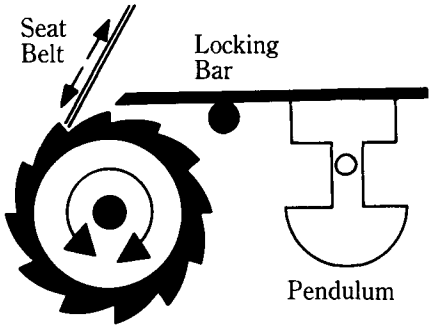

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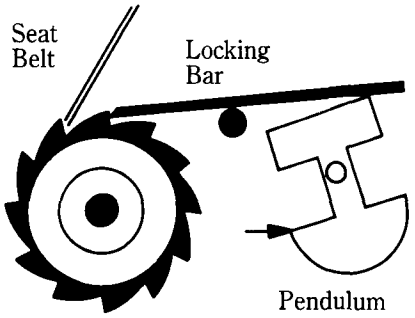

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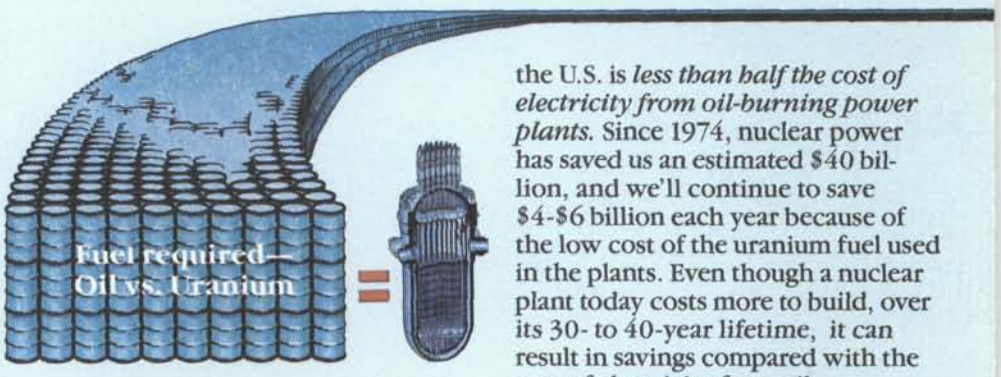

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